

13. A. c.
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I R E N E,

A

TRAGEDY.



Price One Shilling and Six-pence.

W A S H I

Y C O D A S T H

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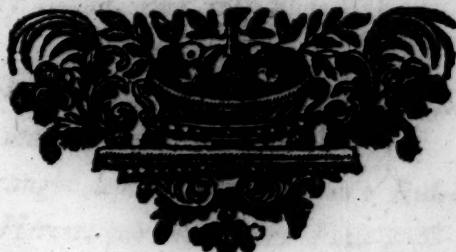
I R E N E :

A

TRAGEDY.

As it is Acted at the
THEATRE ROYAL
IN
DRURY-LANE.

By Mr. *S A M U E L J O H N S O N*. A



L O N D O N :

Printed for R. DODSLEY at *Tully's-head Pall-mall*
and sold by M. COOPER in *Pater-noster-Row*.

M DCC XLIX.

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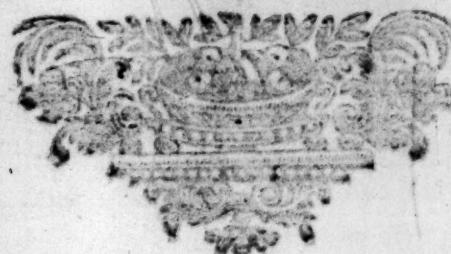
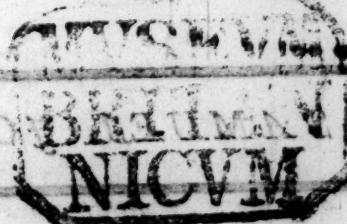
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• ДАУОЯ ЭТАЕНТ

И

• ДАУОЯ



• М О Д О Л

• Библиотека М. Н. Карамзина
• Копия из Парижской библиотеки

• МДCCXII



PROLOGUE.

*E glitt'ring Train ! whom Lace and Velvet bles^s,
Suspend the soft Sollicitudes of Dress ;
From grov'ling Busines^s and superfluous Care,
Ye Sons of Avarice ! a Moment spare :
Vot'ries of Fame and Worshippers of Pow'r !
Dismiss the pleasing Phantoms for an Hour.
Our daring Bard with Spirit unconfin'd,
Spreads wide the mighty Moral for Mankind.
Learn here how Heav'n supports the virtuous Mind,
Daring, tho' calm ; and vigorous, tho' resign'd.
Learn here what Anguish racks the guilty Breast,
In Pow'r dependent, in Success deprest.
Learn here that Peace from Innocence must flow ;
All else is empty Sound, and idle Show.*

*If Truths like these with pleasing Language join ;
Ennobled, yet unchang'd, if Nature shine :
If no wild Draught depart from Reason's Rules,
Nor Gods his Heroes, nor his Lovers Fools :
Intriguing Wits ! his artless Plot forgive ;
And spare him, Beauties ! tho' his Lovers live.*

*Be this at least his Praise ; be this his Pride ;
To force Applause no modern Arts are try'd.*

Shou'd

PROLOGUE.

Shou'd partial Cat-calls all his Hopes confound,
He bids no Trumpet quell the fatal Sound.
Shou'd welcome Sleep relieve the weary Wit,
He rolls no Thunders o'er the drowsy Pit.
No Sndres to captivate the Judgment spreads ;
Nor bribes your Eyes to prejudice your Heads.
Unmov'd tho' Witlings sneer and Rivals rail ;
Studious to please, yet not ashamed to fail.
He scorns the meek Address, the suppliant Strain,
With Merit needless, and without it vain.
In Reason, Nature, Truth he dares to trust :
Ye Fops be silent ! and ye Wits be just !



E P I L O G U E.

*ARRY a Turk ! a haughty, Tyrant King,
Who thinks us Women born to dress and sing
To please his Fancy,----see no other Man----
Let him persuade me to it----if he can :
Besides, he has fifty Wives ; and who can bear
To have the fiftieth Part her poultry Share ?*

*'Tis true, the Fellow's handsome, strait and tall ;
But how the Devil should he please us all !
My Swain is little----true----but be it known,
My Pride's to have that little all my own.
Men will be ever to their Errors blind,
Where Woman's not allow'd to speak her Mind ;
I swear this Eastern Pageantry is Nonsense,
And for one Man---one Wife's enough in Conscience.*

*In vain proud Man usurps what's Woman's Due ;
For us alone, they Honour's Paths pursue :
Inspir'd by us, they Glory's Heights ascend ;
Woman the Source, the Object, and the End.
Tho' Wealth, and Pow'r, and Glory they receive,
These all are Trifles, to what we can give.
For us the Statesman labours, Hero fights,
Bears toilsome Days, and wakes long tedious Nights :
And when blest Peace has silenc'd War's Alarms,
Receives his full Reward in Beauty's Arms,*

The

The PERSONS.

M E N.

MAHOMET,	Emperor of the <i>Turks</i> , Mr. Barry.
CALI BASSA,	First Vicer, Mr. Berry.
MUSTAPHA,	A <i>Turkish</i> Aga, Mr. Sowden.
ABDALLA,	An Officer, Mr. Havard.
HASAN, CARAZA,	{ <i>Turkish</i> Captains, Mr. Usher. Mr. Burton.
DEMETRIUS, LEONTIUS,	{ Greek Noblemen, Mr. Garrick. Mr. Blakes.
MURZA,	An Eunuch,

W O M E N.

ASPASIA, IRENE,	{ Greek Ladies, Mrs. Cibber. Mrs. Pritchard.
--------------------	---

Attendants on IRENE.



I R E N E,

A

TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

DEMETRIUS and LEONTIUS *in Turkish Habits.*

LEONTIUS.



ND is it thus DEMETRIUS meets his Friend,
Hid in the mean Disguise of *Turkish* Robes,
With servile Secrecy to lurk in Shades,
And vent our Suff' rings in clandestine Groans ?

DEMETRIUS.

Till breathless Fury rested from Destruction
These Groans were fatal, these Disguises vain :
But now our *Turkish* Conquerors have quench'd
Their Rage, and pall'd their Appetite of Murder ;
No more the glutted Sabre thirsts for Blood,
And weary Cruelty remits her Tortures.

LEONTIUS.

Yet *Greece* enjoys no Gleam of transient Hope,
No soothing Interval of peaceful Sorrow ;
The Lust of Gold succeeds the Rage of Conquest,
The Lust of Gold, unfeeling and remorseless !
The last Corruption of degenerate Man !
Urg'd by th' imperious Soldier's fierce Command,
The groaning *Greeks* break up their golden Caverns
Pregnant with Stores, that *India's* Mines might envy,
Th' accumulated Wealth of toiling Ages.

B

DEME-

2 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

DEMETRIUS.

That Wealth, too sacred for their Country's Use !
That Wealth, too pleasing to be lost for Freedom !
That Wealth, which granted to their weeping Prince,
Had rang'd embattled Nations at our Gates :
But thus reserv'd to lure the Wolves of *Turkey*,
Adds Shame to Grief, and Infamy to Ruin.
Lamenting Av'rice now too late discovers
Her own neglected, in the publick Safety.

LEONTIUS.

Reproach not Misery.----The Sons of *Greece*,
Ill-fated Race ! So oft besieg'd in vain,
With false Security beheld Invasion.
Why should they fear ?----That Power that kindly spreads
The Clouds, a Signal of impending Show'rs,
To warn the wand'ring Linnet to the Shade,
Beheld without Concern, expiring *Greece*,
And not one Prodigy foretold our Fate.

DEMETRIUS.

A thousand horrid Prodigies foretold it.
A feeble Government, eluded Laws,
A factious Populace, luxurious Nobles,
And all the Maladies of sinking States.
When publick Villainy, too strong for Justice,
Shows his bold front, the Harbinger of Ruin,
Can brave LEONTIUS call for airy Wonders,
Which Cheats interpret, and which Fools regard ?
When some neglected Fabrick nods beneath
The Weight of Years, and totters to the Tempest,
Must Heaven dispatch the Messengers of Light,
Or wake the Dead to warn us of its Fall ?

LEONTIUS.

Well might the Weaknes of our Empire sink
Before such Foes of more than human Force ; Some

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

3

Some Pow'r invisible, from Heav'n or Hell,
Conducts their Armies and asserts their Cause.

DEMETRIUS.

And yet, my Friend, what Miracles were wrought
Beyond the Power of Constancy and Courage ;
Did unresisted Lightning aid their Cannon,
Did roaring Whirlwinds sweep us from the Ramparts :
'Twas Vice that shook our Nerves, 'twas Vice, LEONTIUS,
That froze our Veins, and wither'd all our Powers.

LEONTIUS.

What e'er our Crimes, our Woes demand Compassion.
Each Night protected by the friendly Darkness,
Quitting my close Retreat, I range the City,
And weeping, kiss the venerable Ruins :
With silent Pangs I view the tow'ring Domes,
Sacred to Prayer, and wander thro' the Streets ;
Where Commerce lavish'd unexhausted Plenty,
And Jollity maintain'd eternal Revels.----

DEMETRIUS.

--- How chang'd alas ! - - - Now ghastly Desolation
In Triumph sits upon our shatter'd Spires,
Now Superstition, Ignorance and Error,
Usurp our Temples, and profane our Altars.

LEONTIUS.

From ev'ry Palace burst a mingled Clamour,
The dreadful Diffonance of barb'rous Triumph,
Shrieks of Affright, and Wailings of Distress.
Oft when the Cries of violated Beauty
Arose to Heav'n, and pierc'd my bleeding Breast,
I felt thy Pains, and trembled for ASPASIA.

DEMETRIUS.

ASPASIA ! spare that lov'd, that mournful Name :
Dear hapless Maid----tempestuous Grief o'erbears
My reasoning Pow'rs----Dear, hapless, lost ASPASIA !

B 2

LEONTIUS.

IRENE, A TRAGEDY,

LEONTIUS.

Suspend the Thought.

DEMETRIUS.

All Thought on her is Madness :

Yet let me think----I see the helpless Maid,
Behold the Monsters gaze with savage Rapture,
Behold how Lust and Rapine struggle round her.

LEONTIUS.

Awake, DEMETRIUS, from this dismal Dream,
Sink not beneath imaginary Sorrows :
Call to your Aid your Courage, and your Wisdom ;
Think on the sudden Change of human Scenes ;
Think on the various Accidents of War ;
Think on the mighty Pow'r of awful Virtue ;
Think on that Providence that guards the Good.

DEMETRIUS.

O Providence ! extend thy Care to me,
For Courage droops unequal to the Combat,
And weak Philosophy denies her Succours.
Sure some kind Sabre in the Heat of Battle,
Ere yet the Foe found Leisure to be cruel,
Dismiss'd her to the Sky.

LEONTIUS.

Some virgin Martyr,
Perhaps, enamour'd of resembling Virtue,
With gentle Hand restrain'd the Streams of Life,
And snatch'd her timely from her Country's Fate.

DEMETRIUS.

From those bright Regions of eternal Day,
Where now thou shain'st among thy Fellow-Saints,
Array'd in purer Light, look down on me :
In pleasing Visions, and assuasive Dreams ;
O ! sooth my Soul, and teach me how to lose thee.

LEONTIUS.

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

5

LEONTIUS.

Enough of unavailing Tears, DEMETRIUS,
I came obedient to thy friendly Summons,
And hop'd to share thy Counsels, not thy Sorrows :
While thus we mourn the Fortune of ASPASIA,
To what are we reserv'd ?

DEMETRIUS.

To what I know not :

But hope, yet hope, to Happiness and Honour ;
If Happiness can be without ASPASIA.

LEONTIUS.

But whence this new sprung Hope ?

DEMETRIUS.

From CALI BASSA :

The Chief, whose Wisdom guides the *Turkish* Counsels.
He, tir'd of Slav'ry, tho' the highest Slave,
Projects at once our Freedom and his own ;
And bids us thus disguis'd await him here.

LEONTIUS.

Can he restore the State he could not save ?
In vain, when *Turkey's* troops assai'd our Walls,
His kind Intelligence betray'd their Measures ;
Their Arms prevail'd, though CALI was our Friend.

DEMETRIUS.

When the tenth Sun had set upon our Sorrows,
At Midnight's private Hour a Voice unknown
Sounds in my sleeping Ear, " Awake DEMETRIUS,
" Awake, and follow me to better Fortunes ;"
Surpriz'd I start, and bleſs the happy Dream ;
Then rouzing know the firy Chief ABDALLAH,
Whose quick Impatience feiz'd my doubtful Hand,
And led me to the Shore where CALI stood,
Penſive and listning to the beating Surge.
There in soft Hints and in ambiguous Phrase,

6 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

With all the Diffidence of long Experience,
That oft' had practis'd Fraud, and oft' detected,
The Vet'ran Courtier half reveal'd his Project.
By his Command, equipp'd for speedy Flight,
Deep in a winding Creek a Galley lies,
Mann'd with the bravest of our fellow Captives,
Selected by my Care, a hardy Band,
That long to hail thee Chief.

LEONTIUS.

But what avails
So small a Force? or why should CALI fly?
Or how can CALI's Flight restore our Country?

DEMETRIUS.

Reserve these Questions for a safer Hour,
Or hear himself, for see the Bassa comes.

S C E N E II.

DEMETRIUS, LEONTIUS, CALI BASSA.

CALI.

Now summon all thy Soul, illustrious Christian!
Awake each Faculty that sleeps within thee,
The Courtier's Policy, the Sage's Firmness,
The Warrior's Ardour, and the Patriot's Zeal;
If chas'ning past Events with vain Pursuit,
Or wand'ring in the Wilds of future Being,
A single Thought now rove, recall it home.
But can thy Friend sustain the glorious Cause,
The Cause of Liberty, the Cause of Nations?

DEMETRIUS.

Observe him closely with a Statesman's Eye,
Thou that hast long perus'd the Draughts of Nature,
And know'st the Characters of Vice and Virtue,

Left

IRENE, A TRAGEDY. 7

Left by the Hand of Heav'n on human Clay.

CALI.

His Mien is lofty, his Demeanour great,
Nor sprightly Folly wantons in his Air,
Nor dull Serenity becalms his Eyes.
Such had I trusted once as soon as seen,
But cautious Age suspects the flatt'ring Form,
And only credits what Experience tells.
Has Silence press'd her Seal upon his Lips ?
Does adamantine Faith invest his Heart ?
Will he not bend beneath a Tyrant's Frown ?
Will he not melt before Ambition's Fire ?
Will he not soften in a Friend's Embrace ?
Or flow dissolving in a Woman's Tears ?

DEMETRIUS.

Sooner these trembling Leaves shall find a Voice,
And tell the Secrets of their conscious Walks ;
Sooner the Breeze shall catch the flying Sounds,
And shock the Tyrant with a Tale of Treason.
Your slaughter'd Multitudes that swell the Shore,
With Monuments of Death proclaim his Courage ;
Virtue and Liberty engross his Soul,
And leave no Place for Perfidy or Fear.

LEONTIUS.

I scorn a Trust unwillingly repos'd ;
DEMETRIUS will not lead me to Dishonour ;
Consult in private, call me when your Schemer
Is ripe for Action, and demands the Sword. [Going.

DEMETRIUS.

LEONTIUS stay.

CALI.

Forgive an old Man's Weakness,
And share the deepest Secrets of my Soul,

B 4

My

8 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

My Wrongs, my Fears, my Motives, my Designs.---
When unsuccessful Wars, and civil Factions,
Embroil'd the *Turkish* State----our Sultan's Father
Great *Amurath*, at my Request, forsook
The Cloister's Ease, resum'd the tott'ring Throne,
And snatch'd the Reins of abdicated Pow'r
From giddy MAHOMET's unskilful Hand. *A*
This fir'd the youthful King's ambitious Breast, *the b*
He murmurs Vengeance at the Name of CALI,
And dooms my rash Fidelity to Ruin. *the c*

DEMETRIUS.

Unhappy Lot of all that shine in Courts ; *the d*
For forc'd Compliance, or for zealous Virtue, *the e*
Still odious to the Monarch, or the People. *the f*

CALI.

Such are the Woes when arbitrary Pow'r,
And lawless Paffion, hold the Sword of Justice. *the g*
If there be any Land, as Fame reports,
Where common Laws restrain the Prince and Subject, *the h*
A happy Land, where circulating Pow'r *the i*
Flows through each Member of th' embodied State, *the j*
Sure, not unconscious of the mighty Blessing, *the k*
Her grateful Sons shine bright with ev'ry Virtue ; *the l*
Untainted with the Lust of Innovation, *the m*
Sure all unite to hold her League of Rule *the n*
Unbroken as the sacred Chain of Nature, *the o*
That links the jarring Elements in Peace. *the p*

LEONTIUS.

But say, great Bassa, why the Sultan's Anger,
Burning in vain, delays the Stroke of Death ? *the q*

CALI.

Young, and unsettled in his Father's Kingdoms,
Fierce as he was, he dreaded to destroy

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

9

The Empire's Darling, and the Soldier's Boast ;
But now confirm'd, and swelling with his Conquests,
Secure he tramples my declining Fame,
Frowns unrestrain'd, and dooms me with his Eyes.

DEMETRIUS.

What can reverse thy Doom ?

CALI.

The Tyrant's Death.

DEMETRIUS.

But *Greece* is still forgot.

CALI.

On *A sia's* Coast,

Which lately bles'd my gentle Government,
Soon as the Sultan's unexpected Fate,
Fills all th' astonish'd Empire with Confusion,
My Policy shall raise an easy Throne ;
The *Turkish* Pow'r's from *Europe* shall retreat,
And harrass *Greece* no more with wasteful War.

A Galley mann'd with *Greeks*, thy charge, LEONTIUS,
Attends to waft us to Repose and Safety.

DEMETRIUS.

That Vessel, if observ'd, alarms the Court,
And gives a thousand fatal Questions Birth ;
Why stor'd for Flight ? and why prepar'd by CALI ?

CALI.

This Hour I'll beg, with unsuspecting Face,
Leave to perform my Pilgrimage to *Mecca* ;
Which granted, hides my Purpose from the World,
And, though refus'd, conceals it from the Sultan.

LEONTIUS.

How can a single Hand attempt a Life
Which Armies guard; and Citadels inclose ?

CALI.

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

CALI.

Forgetful of Command, with captive Beauties,
Far from his Troops, he toys his Hours away.
A roving Soldier seiz'd in *Sophia's* Temple
A Virgin shining with distinguish'd Charms,
And brought his beauteous Plunder to the Sultan.

DEMETRIUS.

In *Sophia's* Temple!--What Alarm! ---Proceed.

CALI.

The Sultan gaz'd, he wonder'd and he lov'd;
In Passion lost, he bad the conqu'ring Fair
Renounce her Faith, and be the Queen of *Turkey*;
The pious Maid, with modest Indignation,
Threw back the glitt'ring Bribe.

DEMETRIUS.

Celestial Goodness!

It must, it must be She; her Name?

CALI.

ASPASIA.

DEMETRIUS.

What Hopes, what Terrors rush upon my Soul!
O lead me quickly to the Scene of Fate;
Break through the Politician's tedious Forms,
ASPASIA calls me, let me fly to save her.

LEONTIUS.

Did MAHOMET reproach or praise her Virtue?

CALI.

His Offers oft repeated, still refus'd,
At length rekindled his accustom'd Fury,
And chang'd th' endearing Smile and am'rous Whisper
To threats of Torture, Death and Violation.

DEMETRIUS.

These tedious Narratives of frozen Age

Distract

I R E N E, A T R A G E D Y. III

Distract my Soul, dispatch thy lingring Tale ;
Say, did a Voice from Heav'n restrain the Tyrant ?
Did interposing Angels guard her from him ?

CALI.

Just in the Moment of impending Fate,
Another Plund'rer brought the bright IRENE ;
Of equal Beauty, but of softer Mien,
Fear in her Eye, Submission on her Tongue,
Her mournful Charms attracted his Regards,
Disarm'd his Rage, and in repeated Visits
Gain'd all his Heart ; at length his eager Love
To her transferr'd the Offer of a Crown.

LEONTIUS.

Nor found again the bright Temptation fail.

CALI.

Trembling to grant, nor daring to refuse,
While Heav'n and MAHOMET divide her Fears,
With coy Caresses and with pleasing Wiles
She feeds his Hopes, and sooths him to Delay.
For her, Repose is banish'd from the Night
And Business from the Day. In her Apartments
He lives-----

LEONTIUS.

And there muft fall.

CALI.

But yet th' Attempt
Is hazardous.

LEONTIUS.

Forbear to speak of Hazards,
What has the Wretch that has surviv'd his Country,
His Friends, his Liberty, to hazard ?

CALI.

Life.

DEME-

12 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

DEMETRIUS.

Th' inestimable Privilege of Breathing!
Important Hazard! What's that airy Bubble
When weigh'd with *Greece*, with Virtue, with *ASPASIA*?
A floating Atom, Dust that falls unheeded
Into the adverse Scale, nor shakes the Balance.

CALI.

At least this *Day* be calm.....If we succeed,
ASPASIA's thine, and all thy Life is Rapture...
See! *MUSTAPHA*, the Tyrant's Minion, comes;
Invest *LEONTIUS* with his new Command;
And wait *ABDALEA*'s unsuspected Visits?
Remember Freedom, Glory, *Greece*, and Love.

[*Exeunt Demetrius and Leontius.*

SCENE III.

CALI, MUSTAPHA,

MUSTAPHA.

By what Enchantment does this lovely *Greek*
Hold in her Chains the captivated Sultan?
He tires his Fav'rites with *IRENE*'s Praise,
And seeks the Shades to muse upon *IRENE*;
IRENE steals unheeded from his Tongue,
And mingles unperceiv'd with ev'ry Thought.

CALI.

Why should the Sultan shun the Joys of Beauty,
Or arm his Breast against the Force of Love?
Love, that with sweet Vicissitude relieves
The Warrior's Labours, and the Monarch's Cares.
But will she yet receive the Faith of *Mecca*?

MUSTA-

I R E N E, A T R A G E D Y.

13

MUSTAPHA.

Those pow'ful Tyrants of the Female Breast
Fear and Ambition, urge her to Compliance ;
Dress'd in each Charm of gay Magnificence,
Alluring Grandeur courts her to his Arms,
Religion calls her from the wish'd Embrace,
Paints future Joys, and points to distant Glories.

CALI.

Soon will th' unequal Contest be decided,
Prospects obscur'd by Distance faintly strike.
Each Pleasure brightens at its near Approach,
And every Danger shocks with double Horror.

MUSTAPHA.

How shall I scorn the beautiful Apostate !
How will the bright ASPASIA shine above her !

CALI.

Should she, for Proselytes are always zealous,
With pious Warmth receive our Prophet's Law----

MUSTAPHA.

Heav'n will condemn the mercenary Fervour,
Which Love of Greatnes, not of Truth, inflames.

CALI.

Cease, cease thy Censures, for the Sultan comes
Alone, with am'rous Haste to seek his Love.

S C E N E IV.

MAHOMET, CALIBASSA, MUSTAPHA.

CALI.

Hail, Terror of the Monarchs of the World,
Unshaken be thy Throne as Earth's firm Base,

Live

14 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

Live till the Sun forgets to dart his Beams,
And weary Planets loiter in their Courses.

MAHOMET.

But, CALI, let IRENE share thy Prayers;
For what is Length of Days without IRENE?
I come from empty Noise, and tasteless Pomp,
From Couds that hide a Monarch from himself,
To prove the Sweets of Privacy and Friendship,
And dwell upon the Beauties of IRENE.

CALI.

O may her Beauties last unchang'd by Time,
As those that bless the Mansions of the Good.

MAHOMET.

Each Realm where Beauty turns the graceful Shape,
Swells the fair Breast or animates the Glance,
Adorns my Palace with its brightest Virgins;
Yet unacquainted with these soft Emotions
I walk'd superior, through the Blaze of Charms,
Prais'd without Rapture, left without Regret.
Why rove I now, when absent from my Fair,
From Solitude to Couds, from Couds to Solitude,
Still restless, till I clasp the lovely Maid,
And ease my loaded Soul upon her Bosom?

MUSTAPHA.

Forgive, great Sultan, that intrusive Duty
Enquires the final Doom of *Menodorus*,
The *Grecian* Counsellor.

MAHOMET.

Go see him die;
His martial Rhet'rick taught the *Greeks* Resistance;
Had they prevail'd, I ne'er had known IRENE.

[Exit Mustapha.

SCENE V.

MAHOMET, CALI.

MAHOMET.

Remote from Tumult, in th' adjoining Palace,
Thy Care shall guard this Treasure of my Soul;
There let ASPASIA, since my Fair entreats it,
With Converse chase the melancholy Moments.
Sure, chill'd with sixty winter Camps, thy Blood
At Sight of female Charms will glow no more.

CALI.

These Years, unconquer'd MAHOMET, demand
Desires more pure, and other Cares than Love.
Long have I wish'd, before our Prophet's Tomb,
To pour my Prayers for thy successful Reign,
To quit the Tumults of the noisy Camp,
And sink into the silent Grave in Peace.

MAHOMET.

What! Think of Peace while haughty *Scanderbeg*
Elate with Conquest, in his native Mountains,
Prowls o'er the wealthy Spoils of bleeding *Turkey*?
While fair *Hungaria*'s unexhausted Vallies
Pour forth their Legions, and the roaring *Danube*
Rolls half his Floods unheard through shouting Camps?
Nor couldst thou more support a Life of Sloth
Than *Amurath*-----

CALI,

Still full of *Amurath*!

[Aside.

MAHOMET.

Than *Amurath*, accustom'd to Command,
Could bear his Son upon the *Turkish* Throne.

CALI.

16. I R E N E, A TRAGEDY.

CALI.

This Pilgrimage our Lawgiver ordain'd-----

MAHOMET.

For those who could not please by nobler Service-----

Our warlike Prophet loves an active Faith,

The holy Flame of enterprizing Virtue,

Mocks the dull Vows of Solitude and Penance,

And scorns the lazy Hermit's cheap Devotion;

Shine thou distinguish'd by superior Merit,

With wonted Zeal pursue the Task of War,

Till every Nation reverence the *Koran*,

And ev'ry Suppliant lift his Eyes to *Mecca*.

CALI.

This Regal Confidence, this pious Ardour,

Let Prudence moderate, though not suppress.

Is not each Realm that smiles with kinder Suns,

Or boasts a happier Soil, already thine?

Extended Empire, like expanded Gold,

Exchanges solid Strength for feeble Splendor.

MAHOMET.

Preach thy dull Politics to vulgar Kings,

Thou know'st not yet thy Master's future Greatnes,

His vast Designs, his Plans of boundless Pow'r.

When ev'ry Storm in my Domain shall roar,

When ev'ry Wave shall beat a *Turkish* Shore,

Then, CALI, shall the Toils of Battle cease,

Then dream of Prayer, and Pilgrimage, and Peace.

[*Exeunt.*



A C T



ACT II.

SCENE I.

ASPASIA, IRENE:

IRENE.

ASPASIA, yet pursue the sacred Theme;
 Exhaust the Stores of pious Eloquence,
 And teach me to repell the Sultan's Passion.
 Still at ASPASIA's Voice a sudden Rapture,
 Exalts my Soul, and fortifies my Heart.
 The glitt'ring Vanities of empty Greatness,
 The Hopes and Fears, the Joys and Pains of Life,
 Dissolve in Air, and vanish into Nothing.

ASPASIA.

Let nobler Hopes and juster Fears succeed,
 And bar the Passes of IRENE's Mind
 Against returning Guilt.

IRENE.

When thou art absent
 Death rises to my View, with all his Terrors;
 Then Visions horrid as a Murd'rer's Dreams
 Chill my Resolves, and blast my blooming Virtue:
 Stern Torture shakes his bloody Scourge before me,
 And Anguish gnashes on the fatal Wheel.

ASPASIA:

Since Fear predominates in every Thought,

C

And

18 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

And sways thy Breast with absolute Dominion,
Think on th' insulting Scorn, the conscious Pangs,
The future Miseries that wait th' Apostate ;
So shall Timidity assist thy Reason,
And Wisdom into Virtue turn thy Frailty.

IRENE.

Will not that Pow'r that form'd the Heart of Woman,
And wove the feeble Texture of her Nerves,
Forgive those Fears that shake the tender Frame ?

ASPASIA.

The Weakness we lament, our selves create,
Instructed from our infant Years to court
With counterfeited Fears the Aid of Man ;
We learn to shudder at the rustling Breeze,
Start at the Light, and tremble in the Dark ;
Till Affectation, rip'ning to Belief,
And Folly, frightened at her own Chimeras,
Habitual Cowardice usurps the Soul.

IRENE.

Not all like thee can brave the Shocks of Fate,
Thy Soul by Nature great, enlarg'd by Knowledge,
Soars unencumber'd with our idle Cares,
And all ASPASIA but her Beauty's Man.

ASPASIA.

Each generous Sentiment is thine, DEMETRIUS,
Whose Soul, perhaps, yet mindful of ASPASIA,
Now hovers o'er this melancholy Shade,
Well pleas'd to find thy Precepts not forgotten.
O ! could the Grave restore the pious Hero,
Soon would his Art or Valour set us free,
And bear us far from Servitude and Crimes.

IRENE.

He yet may live.

ASPASIA.

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

19

ASPASIA.

Alas ! delusive Dream !

Too well I know him, his immod'rate Courage,
Th' impetuous Sallies of excessive Virtue,
Too strong for Love, have hurried him on Death.

SCENE II.

ASPASIA, IRENE, CALI, ABDALLA.

CALI to ABDALLA, as they advance.

Behold our future Sultaness, ABDALLA ;—
Let artful Flatt'ry now, to lull Suspicion,
Glide through IRENE to the Sultan's Ear.
Wouldst thou subdue th' obdurate Cannibal
To tender Friendship, praise him to his Mistress.

To IRENE.

Well may those Eyes that view these heav'nly Charms,
Reject the Daughters of contending Kings ;
For what are pompous Titles, proud Alliance,
Empire or Wealth, to Excellence like thine ?

ABDALLA.

Receive th' impatient Sultan to thy Arms ;
And may a long Posterity of Monarchs,
The Pride and Terror of succeeding Days,
Rise from the happy Bed ; and future Queens
Diffuse IRENE's Beauty through the World.

IRENE.

Can MAHOMET's imperial Hand descend
To clasp a Slave ? or, can a Soul like mine,
Unus'd to Power, and form'd for humbler Scenes,
Support the splendid Miseries of Greatness ?

C 2

CALI.

20 IRENE, A TRAGEDY. II

CALI.

No regal Pageant deck'd with casual Honours,
Scorn'd by his Subjects, trampled by his Foes ; How ev'ry
No feeble Tyrant of a petty State
Courts thee to shake on a dependent Throne ; How ev'ry
Born to command, as thou to charm Mankind,
The Sultan from himself derives his Greatness.
Observe, bright Maid, as his resistless Voice
Drives on the Tempest of destructive War,
How Nation after Nation falls before him.

ABDALLA.

At his dread Name the distant Mountains shake
Their cloudy Summits, and the Sons of Fierceness,
That range unciviliz'd from Rock to Rock,
Distrust th' eternal Fortresses of Nature,
And wish their gloomy Caverns more obscure.

ASPASIA.

Forbear this lavish Pomp of dreadful Praise ;
The horrid Images of War and Slaughter
Renew our Sorrows, and awake our Fears.

ABDALLA.

CALI, methinks yon waving Trees afford
A doubtful Glimpse of our approaching Friends ;
Just as I mark'd them, they forsook the Shore,
And turn'd their hasty Steps towards the Garden.

CALI.

Conduct these Queens, ABDALLA, to the Palace :
Such heav'nly Beauty form'd for Adoration,
The Pride of Monarchs, the Reward of Conquest ;
Such Beauty must not shine to vulgar Eyes.

SCENE

SCENE III.

CALI *solus.*

How Heav'n in Scorn of human Arrogance,
Commits to trivial Chance the Fate of Nations !
While with incessant Thought laborious Man
Extends his mighty Schemes of Wealth and Pow'r,
And tow'rs and triumphs in ideal Greatness ;
Some accidental Gust of Opposition
Blasts all the Beauties of his new Creation,
O'erturns the Fabrick of presumptuous Reason,
And whelms the swelling Architect beneath it.
Had not the Breeze untwin'd the meeting Boughs,
And through the parted Shade disclos'd the *Greeks*,
Th' important Hour had pass'd unheeded by,
In all the sweet Oblivion of Delight,
In all the Fopperies of meeting Lovers ;
In Sighs and Tears, in Transports and Embraces,
In soft Complaints, and idle Protestations.

SCENE IV.

CALI, DEMETRIUS, LEONTIUS.

CALI.

Could Omens fright the Resolute and Wise,
Well might we fear impending Disappointments.

LEONTIUS.

Your artful Suit, your Monarch's fierce Denial,
The cruel Dooom of hapless *Menodorus*-----

DEMETRIUS.

And your new Charge, that dear, that heav'nly Maid.-----

C 3

LEONTIUS.

22 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

LEONTIUS.

All this we know already from ABDALLA.

DEMETRIUS.

Such slight Defeats but animate the Brave
To stronger Efforts, and maturer Counsels.

CALI.

My Doom confirm'd establishes my Purpose,
Calmly he heard, till *Amurath's* Resumption
Rose to his Thought, and set his Soul on Fire :
When from his Lips the fatal Name burst out,
A sudden Pause th' imperfect Sense suspended,
Like the dread Stillness of condensing Storms.

DEMETRIUS.

The loudest Cries of Nature urge us forward ;
Despotick Rage pursues the Life of CALI ;
His groaning Country claims LEONTIUS' Aid ;
And yet another Voice, forgive me *Greece*,
The pow'rful Voice of Love inflames DEMETRIUS,
Each ling'ring Hour alarms me for ASPASIA.

CALI.

What Passions reign among thy Crew, LEONTIUS ?
Does chearless Diffidence oppress their Hearts ?
Or sprightly Hope exalt their kindling Spirits ?
Do they with Pain repreſs the ſtruggling Shout,
And listen eager to the rising Wind ?

LEONTIUS.

All there is Hope, and Gaiety, and Courage,
No cloudy Doubts, or languishing Delays ;
Ere I could range them on the crowded Deck,
At once a hundred Voices thunder'd round me,
And every Voice was Liberty and *Greece*.

DEMETRIUS.

Swift, let us rush upon the careless Tyrant,
Nor give him Leisure for another Crime.

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

23

LEONTIUS.

Then let us now resolve, nor idly waste
Another Hour in dull Deliberation.

CALI.

But see, where destin'd to protract our Counsels,
Comes MUSTAPHA.—Your *Turkish* Robes conceal you--
Retire with Speed, while I prepare to meet him
With artificial Smiles, and seeming Friendship.

SCENE V.

CALI and MUSTAPHA.

CALI.

I see the Gloom that low'r's upon thy Brow,
These Days of Love and Pleasure charm not thee ;
Too slow these gentle Constellations roll,
Thou long'st for Stars that frown on human Kind,
And scatter Discord from their baleful Beams.

MUSTAPHA.

How blest art thou, still jocund and serene,
Beneath the Load of Business, and of Years.

CALI.

Sure by some wond'rous Sympathy of Souls,
My Heart still beats responsive to the Sultan's ;
I share, by secret Instinct, all his Joys,
And feel no Sorrow while my Sov'reign smiles.

MUSTAPHA.

The Sultan comes, impatient for his Love ;
Conduct her hither, let no rude Intrusion
Molest these private Walks, or Care invade
These Hours assign'd to Pleasure and IRENE.

C 4

SCENE

SCENE VI.

MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA.

MAHOMET.

Now, MUSTAPHA, pursue thy Tale of Horror,
 Has Treason's dire Infection reach'd my Palace ?
 Can CALI dare the Stroke of heav'nly Justice,
 In the dark Precincts of the gaping Grave,
 And load with Perjuries his parting Soul ?
 Was it for this, that sick'ning in *Epirus*,
 My Father call'd me to his Couch of Death,
 Join'd CALI's Hand to mine, and faint'ring cry'd,
 Restrain the Fervour of impetuous Youth
 With venerable CALI's faithful Counsels ?
 Are these the Counsels ? This the Faith of CALI ?
 Were all our Favours lavish'd on a Villain ?
 Confest ? —

MUSTAPHA,

Confest by dying *Menodorus*.

In his last Agonies the gasping Coward,
 Amidst the Tortures of the burning Steel,
 Still fond of Life, groan'd out the dreadful Secret,
 Held forth this fatal Scroll, then sunk to nothing.

MAHOMET, examining the Paper.

His Correspondence with our Foes of *Greece* !
 His Hand ! His Seal ! The Secrets of my Soul
 Conceal'd from all but him ! All ! all conspire
 To banish Doubt, and brand him for a Villain.
 Our Schemes for ever cross'd, our Mines discover'd,
 Betray'd some Traytor lurking near my Bosom.
 Oft have I rag'd, when their wide-wasting Cannon
 Lay pointed at our Batt'ries yet unform'd,

And

IRENE, A TRAGEDY. 25

And broke the meditated Lines of War,
Detested CALI too, with artful Wonder,
Would shake his wily Head, and closely whisper,
Beware of MUSTAPHA, beware of Treason.

MUSTAPHA.

The Faith of MUSTAPHA despairs Suspicion ;
But yet, great Emperor, beware of Treason ;
Th' insidious Basla fir'd by Disappointment---

MAHOMET.

Shall feel the Vengeance of an injur'd King.
Go, seize him, load him with reproachful Chains ;
Before th' assembled Troops proclaim his Crimes ;
Then leave him stretch'd upon the ling'ring Rack,
Amidst the Camp to howl his Life away.

MUSTAPHA.

Should we before the Troops proclaim his Crimes,
I dread his Arts of seeming Innocence,
His bland Address, and Sorcery of Tongue ;
And should he fall unheard, by sudden Justice,
Th' adoring Soldiers would revenge their Idol.

MAHOMET.

CALI, this Day with hypocritick Zeal,
Implor'd my Leave to visit Mecca's Temple ;
Struck with the Wonder of a Statesman's Goodness,
I rais'd his Thoughts to more sublime Devotion.
Now let him go, pursu'd by silent Wrath,
Meet unexpected Daggers in his Way,
And in some distant Land obscurely die.

MUSTAPHA.

There will his boundless Wealth, the Spoil of Asia,
Heap'd by your Father's ill-plac'd Bounties on him,
Disperse Rebellion through the Eastern World ;
Bribe to his Cause and list beneath his Banners
Arabia's roving Troops, the Sons of Swiftness,

26 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

And arm the *Persian* Heretick against thee ;
There shall he waste thy Frontiers, check thy Conquests,
And though at length subdued, elude thy Vengeance.

MAHOMET.

Elude my Vengeance ? no---My Troops shall range
Th' eternal Snows that freeze beyond *Metis*,
And *Afric*'s torrid Sands in search of CALI.
Should the fierce North upon his frozen Wings
Bear him aloft above the wond'ring Clouds,
And seat him in the *Pleiad*'s golden Chariots,
Thence should my Fury drag him down to Tortures ;
Wherever Guilt can fly, Revenge can follow.

MUSTAPHA.

Wilt thou dismiss the Savage from the Toils
Only to hunt him round the ravag'd World ?

MAHOMET.

Suspend his Sentence---Empire and IRENE
Claim my divided Soul. This Wretch unworthy
To mix with nobler Cares, I'll throw aside
For idle Hours, and crush him at my Leisure.

MUSTAPHA.

Let not th' unbounded Greatness of his Mind
Betray my King to negligence of Danger.
Perhaps the Clouds of dark Conspiracy
Now roll full fraught with Thunder o'er your Head.
Twice since the Morning rose I saw the Bassa,
Like a fell Adder swelling in a Brake,
Beneath the Covert of this verdant Arch
In private Conference ; beside him stood
Two Men unknown, the Partners of his Bosom ;
I mark'd them well, and trac'd in either Face
The gloomy Resolution, horrid Greatness,
And stern Composure of despairing Heroes ;

And,

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

27

And, to confirm my Thought, at sight of me,
As blasted by my Presence, they withdrew
With all the speed of Terror and of Guilt.

MAHOMET.

The strong Emotions of my troubled Soul
Allow no pause for Art or for Contrivance ;
And dark Perplexity distracts my Counsels.
Do thou resolve : For see IRENE comes !
At her approach each ruder Gust of Thought
Sinks like the sighing of a Tempest spent,
And Gales of softer Passion fan my Bosom.

[CALI enters with IRENE, and exit with MUSTAPHA.

SCENE VII.

MAHOMET, IRENE.

MAHOMET.

Wilt thou descend, fair Daughter of Perfection,
To hear my Vows, and give Mankind a Queen ?
Ah ! cease, IRENE, cease those flowing Sorrows,
That melt a Heart, impregnable till now,
And turn thy Thoughts henceforth to Love and Empire.
How will the matchless Beauties of IRENE,
Thus bright in Tears, thus amiable in Ruin,
With all the graceful Pride of Greatnes heighten'd,
Amidst the Blaze of Jewels and of Gold,
Adorn a Throne, and dignify Dominion.

IRENE.

Why all this glare of splendid Eloquence,
To paint the Pageantries of guilty State ?
Must I for these renounce the Hope of Heav'n,
Immortal Crowns and fulness of Enjoyment ?

MAHOMET.

28. IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

MAHOMET.

Vain Raptures all—For your inferiour Natures
Form'd to delight, and happy by delighting ;
Heav'n has reserv'd no future Paradise,
But bids you rove the Paths of Blis, secure
Of total Death and careless of Hereafter ;
While Heav'n's high Minister, whose awful Volume
Records each Act, each Thought of sov'reign Man,
Surveys your Plays with inattentive Glance,
And leaves the lovely Trifler unregarded.

IRENE.

Why then has Nature's vain Munificence
Profusely pour'd her Bounties upon Woman ?
Whence then those Charms thy Tongue has deign'd to flatter,
That Air resistless and enchanting Blush,
Unless the beauteous Fabrick was design'd
A Habitation for a fairer Soul ?

MAHOMET.

Too high, bright Maid, thou rat'st exteriour Grace
Not always do the fairest Flow'rs diffuse
The richest Odours, nor the speckled Shells
Conceal the Gem ; let female Arrogance
Observe the feather'd Wand'rers of the Sky,
With Purple varied and bedrop'd with Gold,
They prune the Wing, and spread the glossy Plumes,
Ordain'd, like you, to flutter and to shine,
And chear the weary Passenger with Musick.

IRENE.

Mean as we are, this Tyrant of the World
Implores our Smiles, and trembles at our Feet :
Whence flow the Hopes and Fears, Despair and Rapture,
Whence all the Bliss and Agonies of Love ?

MAHOMET.

MAHOMET.

Why, when the Balm of Sleep descends on Man,
Do gay Delusions, wand'ring o'er the Brain,
Sooth the delighted Soul with empty Blis ?
To Want give Affluence ? and to Slav'ry Freedom ?
Such are Love's Joys, the Lenitives of Life,
A fancy'd Treasure, and a waking Dream.

IRENE.

Then let me once, in honour of our Sex,
Assume the boastful Arrogance of Man.
Th' attractive Softness, and th' indearing Smile,
And pow'rful Glance, 'tis granted, are our own ;
Nor has impartial Nature's frugal Hand
Exhausted all her nobler Gifts on you ;
Do not we share the comprehensive Thought,
Th' enlivening Wit, the penetrating Reason ?
Beats not the female Breast with gen'rous Passions,
The thirst of Empire, and the Love of Glory ?

MAHOMET.

Illustrious Maid, new Wonders fix me thine,
Thy Soul compleats the Triumphs of thy Face.
I thought, forgive my Fair, the noblest Aim,
The strongest Effort of a female Soul,
Was but to chuse the Graces of the Day ;
To tune the Tongue, to teach the Eyes to roll,
Dispose the Colours of the flowing Robe,
And add new Roses to the faded Cheek.
Will it not charm a Mind like thine exalted,
To shine the Goddess of applauding Nations,
To scatter Happiness and Plenty round thee,
To bid the prostrate Captive rise and live,
To see new Cities tow'r at thy Command,
And blasted Kingdoms flourish at thy smile ?

IRENE.

30. IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

IRENE.

Charm'd with the Thought of blessing human Kind,
Too calm I listen to the flatt'ring Sounds.

MAHOMET.

O seize the Power to bless---IRENE's Nod
Shall break the Fetters of the groaning Christian ;
Greece, in her lovely Patroness secure,
Shall mourn no more her plunder'd Palaces.

IRENE.

Forbear---O do not urge me to my Ruin !

MAHOMET.

To State and Pow'r I court thee, not to Ruin :
Smile on my Wishes, and command the Globe.
Security shall spread her Shield before thee,
And Love infold thee with his downy Wings.

If Greatness please thee, mount th' imperial Seat ;
If Pleasure charm thee, view this soft Retreat ;
Here ev'ry Warbler of the Sky shall sing ;
Here ev'ry Fragrance breathe of ev'ry Spring :
To deck these Bow'rs each Region shall combine,
And ev'n our Prophet's Gardens envy thine :
Empire and Love shall share the blissful Day,
And varied Life steal unperceiv'd away.



ACT



A C T III.

S C E N E I.

CALI, ABDALLA.

CALI enters with a discontented Air; to him enters ABDALLA.

CALI.

IS this the fierce Conspirator ABDALLA?

Is this the restless Diligence of Treason?

Where hast thou linger'd while th' encumber'd Hours

Fly lab'ring with the Fate of future Nations,

And hungry Slaughter scents Imperial Blood?

ABDALLA.

Important Cares detain'd me from your Counsels.

CALI.

Some petty Paffion! some domestick Trifle!

Some vain Amusement of a vacant Soul!

A weeping Wife perhaps, or dying Friend,

Hung on your Neck, and hinder'd your Departure.

Is this a Time for Softness or for Sorrow?

Unprofitable, peaceful, female Virtues!

When eager Vengeance shows a naked Foe,

And kind Ambition points the Way to Greatness.

ABDALLA.

Must then Ambition's Votaries infringe

The Laws of Kindness, break the Bonds of Nature?

And quit the Names of Brother, Friend, and Father?

CALI.

C A L I.

This sov'reign Passion, scornful of Restraint,
 Ev'n from the Birth affects supreme Command,
 Swells in the Breast, and with resistless Force,
 O'erbears each gentler Motion of the Mind.

As when a Deluge overspreads the Plains,
 The wand'ring Rivulet, and silver Lake,
 Mix undistinguish'd with the gen'ral Roar.

A B D A L L A.

Yet can Ambition in ABDALLA's Breast
 Claim but the second Place: there mighty Love
 Has fix'd his Hopes, Inquietudes, and Fears,
 His glowing Wishes, and his jealous Pangs.

C A L I.

Love is indeed the Privilege of Youth;
 Yet, on a Day like this, when Expectation
 Pants for the dread Event---But let us reason----

A B D A L L A.

Hast thou grown old amidst the Croud of Courts,
 And turn'd th' instructive Page of Human Life,
 To cant, at last, of Reason to a Lover?
 Such ill-tim'd Gravity, such serious Folly,
 Might well befit the solitary Student,
 Th' unpractis'd Dervise, or sequester'd Faquir.
 Know'st thou not yet, when Love invades the Soul,
 That all her Faculties receive his Chains?
 That Reason gives her Scepter to his Hand,
 Or only struggles to be more enslav'd?

A S P A S I A ! who can look upon thy Beauties?
 Who hear thee speak, and not abandon Reason?
 Reason ! the hoary Dotard's dull Directress,
 That loses all because she hazards nothing:

Reason !

I R E N E, A T R A G E D Y. 33

Reason ! the tim'rous Pilot, that to shun
The Rocks of Life, for ever flies the Port.

CALI.

But why this sudden Warmth ?

ABDALLA:

Because I love :

Because my slighted Passion burns in vain !
Why roars the Lioness distress'd by Hunger ?
Why foam the swelling Waves when Tempests rise ?
Why shakes the Ground, when subterraneous Fires
Fierce through the bursting Caverns rend their Way ?

CALI.

Not till this Day thou saw'st this fatal Fair ;
Did ever Passion make so swift a Progress ?
Once more reflect, suppress this infant Folly.

ABDALLA.

Gross Fires, enkindled by a Mortal Hand,
Spread by Degrees, and dread th' oppressing Stream ;
The subtler Flames emitted from the Sky,
Flash out at once, with Strength above Resistance.

CALI.

How did ASPASIA welcome your Address ?
Did you proclaim this unexpected Conquest ?
Or pay with speaking Eyes a Lover's Homage ?

ABDALLA.

Confounded, aw'd, and lost in Admiration,
I gaz'd, I trembled ; but I could not speak :
When ev'n as Love was breaking off from Wonder,
And tender Accents quiver'd on my Lips,
She mark'd my sparkling Eyes, and heaving Breast,
And smiling, conscious of her Charms, withdrew.

Enter Demetrius and Leontius.

D

CALI.

CALI.

Now be some Moments Master of thyself,
 Nor let DEMETRIUS know thee for a Rival.
 Hence ! or be calm---To disagree is Ruin.

SCENE II.

CALI, DEMETRIUS, LEONTIUS, ABDALLA.

DEMETRIUS.

When will Occasion smile upon our Wishes,
 And give the Tortures of Suspence a Period ?
 Still must we linger in uncertain Hope ?
 Still languish in our Chains, and dream of Freedom
 Like thirsty Sailors gazing on the Clouds,
 Till burning Death shoots through their wither'd Limbs ?

CALI.

Deliverance is at Hand ; for Turkey's Tyrant
 Sunk in his Pleasures, confident and gay,
 With all the Heroe's dull Security,
 Trusts to my Care his Mistress and his Life,
 And laughs and wantons in the Jaws of Death.

LEONTIUS.

So weak is Man, when destin'd to Destruction,
 The Watchful slumber, and the Crafty trust.

CALI.

At my Command yon' Iron Gates unfold ;
 At my Command the Sentinels retire ;
 With all the Licence of Authority,
 Through bowing Slaves, I range the private Rooms,
 And of To-morrow's Action fix the Scene.

DEMETRIUS.

To-morrow's Action ? Can that hoary Wisdom

Born

Born down with Years, still doat upon To-morrow?
 That fatal Mistress of the Young, the Lazy,
 The Coward, and the Fool, condemn'd to lose
 An useleſs Life in waiting for To-morrow,
 To gaze with longing Eyes upon To-morrow,
 Till interposing Death destroys the Prospect!
 Strange! that this gen'ral Fraud from Day to Day
 Should fill the World with Wretches undetected.
 The Soldier lab'ring through a Winter's March,
 Still sees To-morrow drest in Robes of Triumph;
 Still to the Lover's long-expecting Arms,
 To-morrow brings the visionary Bride.
 But thou, too old to bear another Cheat,
 Learn, that the present Hour alone is Man's.

LEONTIUS.

The present Hour with open Arms invites,
 Seize the kind Fair, and press her to thy Bosom.

DEMETRIUS.

Who knows, ere this important Morrow rise,
 But Fear, or Mutiny may taint the Greeks?
 Who knows if MAHOMET's awaking Anger
 May spare the fatal Bow-string till To-morrow?

ABDALLA.

Had our first *Asian* Foes but known this Ardour,
 We still had wander'd on *Tartarian* Hills.
 Rouse, CALI, shall the Sons of conquer'd *Greece*,
 Lead us to Danger, and abash their Victors?
 This Night with all her conscious Stars be witness,
 Who merits most, DEMETRIUS or ABDALLA.

DEMETRIUS.

Who merits most!---I knew not we were Rivals.

CALI.

Young Man, forbear----The Heat of Youth, no more---

36 I R E N E, A T R A G E D Y.

Well,---'tis decreed---This Night shall fix our Fate.
Soon as the Veil of Evening clouds the Sky,
With cautious Secrecy, **LEONTIUS** steer
Th' appointed Vessel to yon' shaded Bay,
Form'd by this Garden jutting on the Deep ;
There, with your Soldiers arm'd, and Sails expanded,
Await our coming, equally prepar'd
For speedy Flight, or obstinate Defence. *[Exit Leont.*

S C E N E III.

CALI, ABDALLA, DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

Now pause, great Bassa, from the Thoughts of Blood,
And kindly grant an Ear to gentler Sounds,
If e'er thy Youth has known the Pangs of Absence,
Or felt th' impatience of obstructed Love,
Give me, before th' approaching Hour of Fate,
Once to behold the Charms of bright ASPASIA,
And draw new Virtue from her heav'nly Tongue.

CALI.

Let Prudence, ere the Suit be farther urg'd,
Impartial weigh the Pleasure with the Danger.
A little longer, and she's thine for ever.

DEMETRIUS.

Prudence and Love conspire in this Request,
Lest unacquainted with our bold Attempt,
Surprize o'erwhelm her, and retard our Flight.

CALI.

What I can grant, you cannot ask in vain---

DEMETRIUS.

I go to wait thy Call, this kind Consent
Completes the Gift of Freedom and of Life. *[Exit Dem.*

S C E N E

SCENE IV.

CALI, ABDALLA.

ABDALLA.

And this is my Reward---to burn, to languish,
To rave unheeded, while the happy *Greek*,
The Refuse of our Swords, the Dross of Conquest,
Throws his fond Arms about *ASPASIA*'s Neck,
Dwells on her Lips, and sighs upon her Breast ;
Is't not enough, he lives by our Indulgence,
But he must live to make his Master's wretched ?

CALI.

What Claim hast thou to plead ?

ABDALLA,

The Claim of Pow'r,

Th' unquestion'd Claim of Conquerors, and Kings !

CALI.

Yet in the Use of Pow'r remember Justice.

ABDALLA.

Can then th' Assassin lift his treach'rous Hand
Against his King, and cry, Remember Justice ?
Justice demands the forfeit Life of CALI ;
Justice demands that I reveal your Crimes ;
Justice demands--But see th' approaching Sultan.
Oppose my Wishes, and---Remember Justice.

CALI.

Disorder sits upon thy Face---retire.

[*Exit Abdalla, Enter Mahomet.*

SCENE V.

CALI, MAHOMET.

CALI.

Long be the Sultan bless'd with happy Love !

My Zeal marks Gladness dawning on thy Cheek,

D 3

With

38 I R E N E, A TRAGEDY.

With Raptures such as fire the Pagan Crowds,
When pale, and anxious for their Years to come,
They see the Sun surmount the dark Eclipse,
And hail unanimous their conqu'ring God.

MAHOMET.

My Vows, 'tis true, she hears with less Aversion,
She sighs, she blushes, but she still denies.

CALI.

With warmer Courtship press the yielding Fair,
Call to your Aid with boundless Promises
Each rebel Wish, each traitor Inclination
That raises Tumults in the female Breast,
The love of Pow'r, of Pleasure, and of Show.

MAHOMET.

These Arts I try'd, and to inflame her more,
By hateful Business hurried from her sight,
I bid a hundred Virgins wait around her,
Sooth her with all the Pleasures of Command,
Applaud her Charms, and court her to be Great.

Exit MAHOMET.

S C E N E VI.

CALI *solus.*

He's gone—Here rest, my Soul, thy fainting Wing,
Here recollect thy dissipated Pow'rs.—
Our distant Int'rests, and our different Passions
Now haste to mingle in one common Center,
And Fate lies crowded in a narrow Space.
Yet in that narrow Space what Dangers rise?—
Far more I dread ABDALLA's fiery Folly,
Than all the Wisdom of the grave Divan.

Reason

Reason with Reason fights on equal Terms,
The raging Madman's unconnected Schemes
We cannot obviate, for we cannot gues.
Deep in my Breast be treasured this Resolve,
When CALI mounts the Throne ABDALLA dies
Too fierce, too faithless for Neglect or Trust.

[Enter Irene with Attendants.

SCENE VII.

CALI, IRENE, ASPASIA, &c.

CALI.

Amidst the Splendor of encircling Beauty,
Superiour Majesty proclaims the Queen,
And Nature justifies our Monarch's Choice.

IRENE.

Reserve this Homage for some other Fair,
Urge me not on to glittering Guilt, nor pour
In my weak Ear th' intoxicating sounds.

CALI.

Make haste, bright Maid, to rule the willing World;
Aw'd by the Rigour of the Sultan's Justice,
We court thy gentleness.

ASPASIA.

Can CALI's Voice

Concur to pres a hapless Captive's Ruin?

CALI.

Long would my Zeal for MAHOMET and Thee
Detain me here. But Nations call upon me,
And Duty bids me chuse a distant Walk,
Nor taint with Care the Privacies of Love.

40 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

SCENE VIII.

IRENE, ASPASIA, Attendants.

ASPASIA.

If yet this shining Pomp, these sudden Honours,
Swell not thy Soul beyond Advice or Friendship,
Not yet inspire the Follies of a Queen,
Or tune thine Ear to soothing Adulation,
Suspend awhile the Privilege of Pow'r
To hear the Voice of Truth ; dismiss thy Train,
Shake off th' Incumbrances of State a moment,
And lay the tow'ring Sultaness aside,

[Irene signs to her Attendants to retire.

While I foretell thy Fate ; that Office done,---
No more I boast th' ambitious Name of Friend,
But sink among thy Slaves without a Murmur,

IRENE,

Did regal Diadems invest my Brow,
Yet should my Soul, still faithful to her Choice,
Esteem ASPASIA's Breast, the noblest Kingdom.

ASPASIA.

The Soul once tainted with so foul a Crime,
No more shall glow with Friendship's hallow'd Ardour :
Those holy Beings, whose superiour Care
Guides erring Mortals to the Paths of Virtue,
Affrighted at Impiety like thine,
Resign their Charge to Baseness and to Ruin.

IRENE.

Upbraid me not with fancy'd Wickedness,
I am not yet a Queen, or an Apostate.
But should I sin beyond the hope of Mercy,
If when Religion prompts me to refuse,
The dread of instant Death restrains my Tongue ?

ASPASIA.

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

ASPASIA.

Reflect that Life and Death, affecting sounds,
Are only varied Modes of endless Being ;
Reflect that Life, like ev'ry other Blessing,
Derives its Value from its Use alone ;
Not for itself but for a nobler End
Th'Eternal gave it, and that End is Virtue,
When inconsistent with a greater Good,
Reason commands to cast the less away ;
Thus Life, with loss of Wealth, is well preserv'd,
And Virtue cheaply sav'd with loss of Life.

IRENE.

If built on settled Thought, this Constancy
Not idly flutters on a boastful Tongue,
Why, when Destruction rag'd aronnd our Walls,
Why fled this haughty Heroine from the Battle ?
Why then did not this warlike Amazon
Mix in the War, and shine among the Heroes ?

ASPASIA.

Heav'n, when its Hand pour'd softness on our Limbs
Unfit for Toil, and polish'd into Weakness ;
Made passive Fortitude the Praise of Woman :
Our only Arms are Innocence and Meekness.
Not then with raving Cries I fill'd the City,
But while DEMETRIUS, dear lamented Name !
Pour'd storms of Fire upon our fierce Invaders,
Implor'd th' eternal Power to shield my Country,
With silent Sorrows, and with calm Dévolution.

IRENE.

O ! did IRENE shine the Queen of Turkey,
No more should *Greece* lament those Prayers rejected.
Again should golden Splendour grace her Cities,
Again her prostrate Palaces should rise,

IRENE; A TRAGEDY.

Again her Temples sound with holy Musick :
 No more should Danger fright, or Want distress
 The smiling Widows, and protected Orphans.

ASPASIA.

Be virtuous Ends pursued by virtuous Means,
 Nor think th' Intention sanctifies the Deed :
 That Maxim publish'd in an impious Age,
 Would loose the wild Enthusiast to destroy,
 And fix the fierce Usurper's bloody Title.
 Then Bigotry might send her Slaves to War,
 And bid Success become the Test of Truth ?
 Unpitying Massacre might waste the World,
 And Persecution boast the Call of Heav'n.

IRENE.

Shall I not wish to cheer afflicted Kings,
 And plan the Happiness of mourning Millions ?

ASPASIA.

Dream not of Pow'r thou never can'st attain :
 When social Laws first harmonis'd the World,
 Superior Man possess'd the Charge of Rule,
 The Scale of Justice, and the Sword of Pow'r,
 Nor left us aught but Flattery and State.

IRENE.

To me my Lover's Fondness will restore,
 Whate'er Man's Pride has ravish'd from our Sex.

ASPASIA.

When soft Security shall prompt the Sultan,
 Freed from the Tumults of unsettled Conquest,
 To fix his Court, and regulate his Pleasures,
 Soon shall the dire Seraglio's horrid Gates
 Close like th' eternal Bars of Death upon thee,
 Immur'd, and buried in perpetual Sloth,

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

43

That gloomy Slumber of the stagnant Soul ;
There shalt thou view from far the quiet Cottage,
And sigh for cheerful Poverty in vain :
There wear the tedious Hours of Life away,
Beneath each Curse of unrelenting Heav'n,
Despair, and Slav'ry, Solitude, and Guilt.

IRENE.

There shall we find the yet untasted Bliss
Of Grandeur and Tranquillity combin'd.

ASPASIA.

Tranquillity and Guilt, disjoin'd by Heav'n,
Still stretch in vain their longing Arms afar ;
Nor dare to pass th' insuperable Bound,
Ah ! let me rather seek the Convent's Cell ;
There when my Thoughts, at interval of Pray'r,
Descend to range these Mansions of Misfortune,
Oft' shall I dwell on our disastrous Friendship,
And shed the pitying Tear for lost IRENE.

IRENE.

Go, languish on in dull Obscurity ;
Thy dazzled Soul with all its boasted Greatness,
Shrinks at th' o'erpow'ring Gleams of regal State,
Stoops from the Blaze like a degenerate Eagle,
And flies for Shelter to the Shades of Life.

ASPASIA.

On me, should Providence, without a Crime,
The weighty Charge of Royalty confer ;
Call me to civilize the *Russian* Wilds,
Or bid soft Science polish *Briton's* Heroes :
Soon shouldst thou see, how false thy weak Reproach.
My Bosom feels, enkindled from the Sky,
The lambent Flames of mild Benevolence,
Untouch'd by fierce Ambition's raging Fires.

IRENE.

44 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

IRENE.

Ambition is the Stamp, impress'd by Heav'n
To mark the noblest Minds, with active Heat
Inform'd they mount the Precipice of Pow'r,
Grasp at Command, and tow'r in quest of Empire ;
While vulgar Souls compassionate their Cares,
Gaze at their Height and tremble at their Danger :
Thus meaner Spirits with Amazement mark
The varying Seasons, and revolving Skies,
And ask, what guilty Pow'r's rebellious Hand
Rolls with eternal Toil the pond'rous Orbs ;
While some Archangel nearer to Perfection,
In easy State presides o'er all their Motions,
Directs the Planets with a careles Nod,
Conducts the Sun, and regulates the Spheres.

ASPASIA.

Well may'st thou hide in Labyrinths of Sound
The Cause that shrinks from Reason's powerful Voice,
Stoop from thy Flight, trace back th'entangled Thought,
And set the glitt'ring Fallacy to view.
Not Pow'r I blame, but Pow'r obtain'd by Crime,
Angelic Greatness is Angelic Virtue.
Amidst the Glare of Courts, the Shout of Armies,
Will not th' Apostate feel the Pangs of Guilt,
And wish too late for Innocence and Peace ?
Curst as the Tyrant of th' infernal Realms,
With gloomy State and agonizing Pomp.

S C E N E IX.

IRENE, ASPASIA, MAID.

MAID.

A Turkish Stranger of majestick Mien,
Asks at the Gate Admission to ASPASIA,

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

45

Commission'd, as he says, by CALI. BASSA.

IRENE.

Who'e'er thou art, or whatso'er thy Message, [Aside
Thanks for this kind Relief---with Speed admit him.

ASPASIA.

He comes, perhaps, to separate us for ever;
When I am gone remember, O ! remember,
That none are great, or happy, but the Virtuous.

[Exit Irene, Enter DEMETRIUS.

SCENE X.

ASPASIA, DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis she—My Hope, my Happiness, my Love !

ASPASIA ! do I once again behold thee ?

Still, still the same—unclouded by Misfortune !

Let my blest Eyes, for ever gaze —

ASPASIA.

DEMETRIUS !

DEMETRIUS.

Why does the Blood forsake thy lovely Cheek ?

Why shoots this Chilness through thy shaking Nerves ?

Why does thy Soul retire into herself ?

Recline upon my Breast thy sinking Beauties :

Revive—Revive to Freedom and to Love.

ASPASIA.

What well known Voice prohounc'd the grateful Sounds

Freedom and Love ? Alas ! I'm all Confusion,

A sudden Mist o'ercasts my darken'd Soul,

The Present, Past, and Future swim before me,

Lost in a wild Perplexity of Joy.

DEM-

46 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

DEMETRIUS.

Such Ecstasy of Love ! such pure Affection,
What Worth can merit ? or what Faith reward ?

ASPASIA.

A thousand Thoughts imperfect and distracted,
Demand a Voice, and struggle into Birth ;
A thousand Questions press upon my Tongue,
But all give way to Rapture and DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

O say, bright Being, in this Age of Absence,
What Fears, what Griefs, what Dangers haft thou known ?
Say, how the Tyrant threaten'd, flatter'd, sigh'd,
Say, how he threaten'd, flatter'd, sigh'd in vain !
Say, how the Hand of Violence was rais'd,
Say, how thou call'dst in Tears upon DEMETRIUS !

ASPASIA.

Inform me rather, how thy happy Courage
Stem'd in the Breach the Deluge of Destruction,
And pass'd uninjur'd through the Walks of Death ?
Did savage Anger, and licentious Conquest
Behold the Hero with ASPASIA's Eyes ?
And thus protected in the gen'ral Ruin,
O say, what guardian Pow'r convey'd thee hither.

DEMETRIUS,

Such strange Events, such unexpected Chances,
Beyond my warmest Hope, or wildest Wishes,
Concur'd to give me to ASPASIA's Arms,
I stand amaz'd, and ask, if yet I clasp thee.

ASPASIA.

Sure Heav'n, for Wonders are not wrought in vain,
That joins us thus, will never part us more.

S C E N E

SCENE XI.

DEMETRIUS, ASPASIA, ABDALLA.

ABDALLA.

It parts you now—The hasty Sultan sign'd
The Laws unread, and flies to his IRENE.

DEMETRIUS.

Fix'd and intent on his IRENE's Charms,
He envies none the Converse of ASPASIA.

ABDALLA.

ASPASIA's Absence will inflame Suspicion ;
She cannot, must not, shall not linger here,
Prudence and Friendship bid me force her from you.

DEMETRIUS.

Force her ! profane her with a Touch, and die.

ABDALLA.

'Tis *Greece*, 'tis Freedom calls ASPASIA hence,
Your careless Love betrays your Country's Cause.

DEMETRIUS.

If we must part—

ASPASIA.

No ! let us die together.

DEMETRIUS.

If we must part—

ABDALLA.

Dispatch ; th' encreasing Danger
Will not admit a Lover's long Farewell,
The long-drawn Intercourse of Sighs and Kisses.

DEM-

DEMETRIUS.

Then—O my Fair, I cannot bid thee goe ;
Receive her, and prote& her, gracious Heav'n !
Yet let me watch her dear departing Steps,
If Fate persues me, let it find me here.

Reproach not *Greece*, a Lover's fond Delays,
Nor think thy Cause neglected while I gaze,
New Force, new Courage, from each Glance I gain,
And find our Paffions not infus'd in vain.



ACT



A C T IV.

S C E N E I.

DEMETRIUS, ASPASIA, *enter as talking.*

ASPASIA.

ENOUGH—resistless Reason calms my Soul—
Approving Justice smiles upon your Cause,
And Nature's Rights entreat th' asserting Sword.
Yet when your Hand is lifted to destroy,
Think—but excuse a Woman's needless Caution,
Purge well thy Mind from ev'ry private Passion,
Drive Int'rest, Love, and Vengeance from thy Thoughts,
Fill all thy ardent Breast with *Greece* and Virtue,
Then strike secure, and Heav'n assisst the Blow.

DEMETRIUS.

Thou kind Assistant of my better Angel,
Propitious Guide of my bewilder'd Soul,
Calm of my Cares, and Guardian of my Virtue.

ASPASIA.

My Soul first kindled by thy bright Example,
To noble Thought and gen'rous Emulation,
Now but reflects those Beams that flow'd from thee.

DEMETRIUS.

With native Lustre and unborrow'd Greatness,
Thou shin'st, bright Maid, superior to Distress;
Unlike the trifling Race of vulgar Beauties,
Those glitt'ring Dew-drops of a vernal Morn,

E—

That

50 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

That spread their Colours to the genial Beam,
And sparkling quiver to the Breath of *May* ;
But when the Tempest with sonorous Wing
Sweeps o'er the Grove, forsake the lab'ring Bough,
Dispers'd in Air or mingled with the Dust.

ASPASIA.

Forbear this Triumph — still new Conflicts wait us,
Foes unforeseen, and Dangers unsuspected.
Oft when the fierce Besiegers eager Host
Beholds the fainting Garrison retire,
And rushes joyful to the naked Wall,
Destruction flashes from th' insidious Mine,
And sweeps th' exulting Conqueror away :
Perhaps in vain the Sultan's Anger spar'd me,
To find a meaner Fate from treach'rous Friendship —

ABDALLA —

DEMETRIUS.

Can ABDALLA then dissemble ?
That fiery Chief, renown'd for gen'rous Freedom,
For Zeal unguarded, undissembled Hate,
For daring Truth, and turbulence of Honour ?

ASPASIA.

This open Friend, this undesigning Hero,
With noisy Falshoods forc'd me from your Arms,
To shock my Virtue with a Tale of Love.

DEMETRIUS.

Did not the Cause of *Greece* restrain my Sword,
ASPASIA should not fear a second Insult.

ASPASIA.

His Pride and Love by Turns inspir'd his Tongue,
And intermix'd my Praises with his own ;
His Wealth, his Rank, his Honours he recounted,
Till in the midst of Arrogance and Fondness,

Th' ap-

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

51

Th' approaching Sultan forc'd me from the Palace ;
Then while he gaz'd upon his yielding Mistress,
I stole unheeded from their ravish'd Eyes,
And sought this happy Grove in quest of Thee.

DEMETRIUS.

Soon may the final Stroke decide our Fate,
Lest baneful Discord crush our infant Scheme,
And strangled Freedom perish in the Birth.

ASPASIA.

My Bosom harraf'd with alternate Passions,
Now hopes, now fears—

DEMETRIUS.

Th' Anxieties of Love.

ASPASIA.

Think how the sov'reign Arbiter of Kingdoms,
Detests thy false Associates black Designs,
And frowns on Perjury, Revenge and Murder.
Embark'd with Treason on the Seas of Fate,
When Heav'n shall bid the swelling Billows rage,
And point vindictive Lightnings at Rebellion,
Will not the Patriot share the Traytor's Danger ?
Oh could thy Hand unaided free thy Country,
Nor mingled Guilt pollute the sacred Cause !

DEMETRIUS.

Permitted oft, though not inspir'd by Heav'n,
Successful Treasons punish impious Kings.

ASPASIA.

Nor end my Terrors with the Sultan's Death ;
Far as Futurity's untravell'd Waste
Lies open to Conjecture's dubious Kei,
On ev'ry Side Confusion, Rage and Death,
Perhaps the Phantoms of a Woman's Fear,
Beset the treacherous Way with fatal Ambush ;

52 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

Each *Turkish* Bosom burns for thy Destruction,
Ambitious CALI dreads the Statesman's Arts,
And hot ABDALLA hates the happy Lover.

DEMETRIUS.

Capricious Man ! to Good and Ill inconstant,
Too much to fear or trust, is equal Weakness.
Sometimes the Wretch unaw'd by Heav'n or Hell,
With mad Devotion idolizes Honour.
The Bassa, reeking with his Master's Murder,
Perhaps may start at violated Friendship.

ASPASIA.

How soon, alas ! will Int'rest, Fear, or Envy,
O'erthrow such weak, such accidental Virtue,
Nor built on Faith, nor fortify'd by Conscience ?

DEMETRIUS.

When desp'rate Ills demand a speedy Cure,
Distrust is Cowardice, and Prudence Folly.

ASPASIA.

Yet think a Moment, ere you court Destruction,
What Hand, when Death has snatch'd away DEMETRIUS,
Shall guard ASPASIA from triumphant Lust.

DEMETRIUS.

Dismiss these needless Fears—a Troop of *Greeks*
Well known, long try'd, expect us on the Shore.
Borne on the Surface of the smiling Deep,
Soon shalt thou scorn, in Safety's Arms repos'd,
ABDALLA's Rage and CALI's Stratagems.

ASPASIA.

Still, still Distrust sits heavy on my Heart.
Will e'er an happier Hour revisit *Greece* ?

DEMETRIUS.

Should Heav'n yet unappeas'd refuse its Aid,
Disperse our Hopes, and frustrate our Designs,

Yet

Yet shall the Conscience of the great Attempt
Diffuse a Brightness on our future Days ;
Nor will his Country's Groans reproach DEMETRIUS.
But how can't thou support the Woes of Exile ?
Can't thou forget hereditary Splendours,
To live obscure upon a foreign Coast,
Content with Science, Innocence and Love ?

ASPASIA.

Nor Wealth, nor Titles, make ASPASIA's Bliss.
O'erwhelm'd and lost amidst the publick Ruins
Unmov'd I saw the glitt'ring Trifles perish,
And thought the petty Dross beneath a Sigh.
Chearful I follow to the rural Cell,
Love be my Wealth, and my Distinction Virtue.

DEMETRIUS.

Submissive and prepar'd for each Event,
Now let us wait the last Award of Heav'n,
Secure of Happiness from Flight or Conquest,
Nor fear the Fair and Learn'd can want Protection.
The mighty *Tuscan* courts the banish'd Arts
To kind *Italia*'s hospitable Shades ;
There shall soft Leisure wing th' excursive Soul,
And Peace propitious smile on fond Desire ;
There shall despotic Eloquence resume
Her ancient Empire o'er the yielding Heart ;
There Poetry shall tune her sacred Voice,
And wake from Ignorance the Western World.

SCENE II.

DEMETRIUS, ASPASIA, CALI.

CALI.

At length th' unwilling Sun resigns the World
 To Silence and to Rest. The Hours of Darkness,
 Propitious Hours to Stratagem and Death,
 Pursue the last Remains of ling'ring Light.

DEMETRIUS.

Count not these Hours as Parts of vulgar Time,
 Think them a sacred Treasure lent by Heav'n,
 Which squander'd by Neglect, or Fear, or Folly,
 No Pray'r recalls, no Diligence redeems ;
 To-morrow's Dawn shall see the *Turkish* King
 Stretch'd in the Dust, or tow'ring on his Throne ;
 To-morrow's Dawn shall see the mighty CALI
 The sport of Tyranny, or Lord of Nations.

CALI.

Then waste no longer these important Moments
 In soft Endearments, and in gentle Murmurs,
 Nor lose in Love the Patriot and the Hero.

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis Love combin'd with Guilt alone, that melts
 The soften'd Soul to Cowardice and Sloth ;
 But virtuous Passion prompts the great Resolve,
 And fans the slumb'ring Spark of heav'nly Fire.
 Retire, my Fair, that Pow'r that smiles on Goodness
 Guide all thy Steps, calm ev'ry stormy Thought,
 And still thy Bosom with the Voice of Peace.

ASPASIA.

Soon may we meet again, secure and free,
 To feel no more the Pangs of Separation.

[Exit.]

DEMETRIUS,

DEMETRIUS, CALL.

DEMETRIUS.

This Night alone is ours---Our mighty Foe,
No longer lost in am'rous Solitude,
Will now remount the flighted Seat of Empire,
And show IRENE to the shouting People :
ASPASIA left her sighing in his Arms,
And list'ning to the pleasing Tale of Pow'r,
With soften'd Voice she dropp'd the faint Refusal,
Smiling Consent she sat, and blushing Love.

CALL.

Now, Tyrant, with Satiety of Beauty,
Now feast thine Eyes, thine Eyes that ne'er hereafter
Shall dart their am'rous Glances at the Fair,
Or glare on CALI with malignant Beams.

SCENE III.

DEMETRIUS, CALI, LEONTIUS, ABDALLA.

LEONTIUS.

Our Bark unseen has reach'd th' appointed Bay,
And where yon Trees wave o'er the foaming Surge
Reclines against the Shore : Our Grecian Troop
Extends its Lines along the sandy Beach,
Elate with Hope, and panting for a Foe.

ABDALLA.

The fav'ring Winds assist the great Design,
Sport in our Sails, and murmur o'er the Deep.

CALI.

'Tis well---A single Blow compleats our Wishes :
Return with speed, LEONTIUS, to your Charge;
The Greeks disorder'd by their Leader's Absence,

May droop dismay'd, or kindle into Madness.

LEONTIUS.

Suspected still? --- What Villain's pois'nous Tongue
Dares join LEONTIUS' Name with Fear or Falshood?
Have I for this preserv'd my guiltless Bosom,
Pure as the Thoughts of infant Innocence?
Have I for this defy'd the Chiefs of Turkey,
Intrepid in the flaming Front of War?

CALI.

Hast thou not search'd my Soul's profoundest Thoughts?
Is not the Fate of *Greece* and CALI thine?

LEONTIUS.

Why has thy Choice then pointed out LEONTIUS,
Unfit to share this Night's illustrious Toils?
To wait remote from Action, and from Honour,
An idle List'ner to the distant Cries
Of slaughter'd Infidels, and Clash of Swords!
Tell me the Cause, that while thy Name, DEMETRIUS,
Shall soar triumphant on the Wings of Glory,
Despis'd and curs'd, LEONTIUS must descend
Through hissing Ages, a proverbial Coward,
The Tale of Women, and the Scorn of Fools?

DEMETRIUS.

Can brave LEONTIUS be the Slave of Glory?
Glory, the casual Gift of thoughtless Crouds!
Glory, the Bribe of avaricious Virtue!
Be but my Country free, be thine the Praise;
I ask no Witness, but attesting Conscience,
No Records, but the Records of the Sky.

LEONTIUS.

Wilt thou then head the Troop upon the Shore,
While I destroy th' Oppressor of Mankind?

DEMETRIUS.

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

578

DEMETRIUS.

What can't thou boast superior to DEMETRIUS ?
Ask to whose Sword the *Greeks* will trust their Cause,
My Name shall echo through the shouting Field ;
Demand whose Force yon *Turkish* Heroes dread,
The shudd'ring Camp shall murmur out DEMETRIUS.

CALI.

Must *Greece*, still wretched by her Children's Folly,
For ever mourn their Avarice or Factions ?
DEMETRIUS justly pleads a double Title,
The Lover's Int'rest aids the Patriot's claim.

LEONTIUS.

My Pride shall ne'er protract my Country's Woes ;
Succeed, my Friend, unenvied by LEONTIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

I feel new Spirit shoot along my Nerves,
My Soul expands to meet approaching Freedom.
Now hover o'er us with propitious Wings,
Ye sacred Shades of Patriots and of Martyrs ;
All ye, whose blood tyrannick Rage effus'd,
Or Persecution drank, attend our Call ;
And from the Mansions of perpetual Peace
Descend, to sweeten Labours once your own.

CALI.

Go then, and with united Eloquence
Confirm your Troops ; and when the Moon's fair Beam
Plays on the quiv'ring Waves, to guide our Flight,
Return DEMETRIUS, and be free for ever.

[*Exeunt Dem. and Leon.*

SCENE

SCENE IV.

CALI, ABDALLA.

ABDALLA.

How the new Monarch, swell'd with airy Rule,
Looks down, contemptuous, from his fancy'd Height,
And utters Fate, unmindful of ABDALLA.

CALI.

Far be such black Ingratitude from CALI,
When *Asia*'s Nations own me for their Lord,
Wealth, and Command, and Grandeur shall be thine.

ABDALLA.

Is this the Recompence reserv'd for me ?
Dar'st thou thus dally with ABDALLA's Passion ?
Henceforward hope no more my slighted Friendship,
Wake from thy Dream of Pow'r to Death and Tortures,
And bid thy visionary Throne farewell.

CALI.

Name and enjoy thy Wish——

ABDALLA.

I need not name it;
ASPASIA's Lovers know but one Desire,
Nor hope, nor wish, nor live but for ASPASIA.

CALI.

That fatal Beauty plighted to DEMETRIUS
Heav'n makes not mine to give.

ABDALLA.

Nor to deny.

CALI.

Obtain her and possess, thou know'st thy Rival.

ABDALLA.

Too well I know him, since on *Thracia's* Plains
 I felt the Force of his tempestuous Arm,
 And saw my scatter'd Squadrons fly before him.
 Nor will I trust th' uncertain Chance of Combat ;
 The Rights of Princes let the Sword decide,
 The petty Claims of Empire and of Honour :
 Revenge and subtle Jealousy shall teach
 A surer Passage to his hated Heart.

CALI.

O spare the gallant *Greek*, in him we lose
 The Politician's Arts, and Heroe's Flame.

ABDALLA.

When next we meet before we storm the Palace,
 The Bowl shall circle to confirm our League,
 Then shall these Juices taint *DEMETRIUS'* Draught,

[*Shewing a Phial.*]

And stream destructive through his freezing Veins :
 Thus shall he live to strike th' important Blow,
 And perish ere he tastes the Joys of Conquest.

SCENE V.

MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA, CALI, ABDALLA.

MAHOMET.

Henceforth for ever happy be this Day,
 Sacred to Love, to Pleasure, and *IRENE* :
 The matchless Fair has blefs'd me with Compliance ;
 Let every Tongue resound *IRENE*'s Praise,
 And spread the general Transport through Mankind.

CALI.

CALI.

Blest Prince, for whom indulgent Heav'n ordains
 At once the Joys of Paradise and Empire,
 Now join thy People's, and thy CALI's Prayers,
 Suspend thy Passage to the Seats of Bliss,
 Nor wish for Houries in IRENE's Arms.

MAHOMET.

Forbear—I know the long try'd Faith of CALI.

CALI.

O ! could the Eyes of Kings, like those of Heav'n,
 Search to the dark Recesses of the Soul,
 Oft would they find Ingratitude and Treason,
 By Smiles, and Oaths, and Praises ill disguis'd.
 How rarely would they meet in crowded Courts,
 Fidelity so firm, so pure, as mine !

MUSTAPHA.

Yet ere we give our loosen'd Thoughts to Rapture,
 Let Prudence obviate an impending Danger,
 Tainted by Sloth, the Parent of Sedition,
 The hungry Janizary burns for Plunder,
 And growls in private o'er his idle Sabre.

MAHOMET.

To still their Murmurs ere the twentieth Sun
 Shall shed his Beams upon the bridal Bed,
 I rouse to War, and conquer for IRENE.
 Then shall the Rhodian mourn his sinking Tow'rs,
 And Buda fall, and proud Vienna tremble,
 Then shall Venetia feel the Turkish Pow'r,
 And subject Seas roar round their Queen in vain.

ABDALLA.

Then seize fair Italy's delightful Coast,
 To fix your Standard in Imperial Rome.

MAHOMET.

Her Sons malicious Clemency shall spare,

To

I RENE, A TRAGEDY. 61

To form new Legends, sanctify new Crimes,
To canonize the Slaves of Superstition,
And fill the World with Foilies and Impostures,
Till angry Heav'n shall mark them out for Ruin,
And War o'erwhelm them in their Dream of Vice.
O could her fabled Saints, and boasted Prayers
Call forth her ancient Heroes to the Field,
How should I joy, 'midst the fierce shock of Nations,
To cross the Tow'ring of an equal Soul,
And bid the master Genius rule the World.
ABDALLA, CALI, go--- proclaim my Purpose.

[*Exeunt Cali and Abdalla.*

S C E N E VI.

MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA.

MAHOMET.

Still CALI lives, and must he live To-morrow?
That fawning Villain's forc'd Congratulations
Will cloud my Triumphs, and pollute the Day.

MUSTAPHA.

With cautious Vigilance, at my Command,
Two faithful Captains, HASAN and CARAZA,
Pursue him through his Labyrinths of Treason,
And wait your Summons to report his Conduct.

MAHOMET.

Call them---but let them not prolong their Tale,
Nor press too much upon a Lover's Patience. [*Exit Must.*

S C E N E VII.

MAHOMET *solus.*

Whome'er the Hope, still blasted, still renew'd,
Of Happiness, lurcs on from Toil to Toil,

Remember

62 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

Remember MAHOMET, and cease thy Labour,
Behold him here, in Love, in War successful,
Behold him wretched in his double Triumph ;
His Fav'rite faithless, and his Mistress base.
Ambition only gave her to my Arms,
By Reason not convinc'd, nor won by Love.
Ambition was her Crime, but meaner Folly,
Dooms me to loath at once, and doat on Falshood,
And idolize th' Apostate I contemn.
If thou art more than the gay Dream of Fancy,
More than a pleasing Sound without a Meaning,
O Happiness ! sure thou art all ASPASIA'S.

S C E N E VIII.

MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA, HASAN and CARAZA.

MAHOMET.

CARAZA speak---have ye remark'd the BASSA ?

CARAZA.

Close, as we might unseen, we watch'd his Steps ;
His Air disorder'd, and his Gait unequal,
Betray'd the wild Emotions of his Mind.
Sudden he stops, and inward turns his Eyes,
Absorb'd in Thought ; then starting from his Trance,
Constrains a sullen Smile, and shoots away.
With him ABDALLA we beheld---

MUSTAPHA.

ABDALLA !

MAHOMET.

He wears of late Resentment on his Brow,
Deny'd the Government of Servia's Province.

CARAZA.

We mark'd him storming in Excess of Fury,

And

And heard within the Thicket that conceal'd us,
An undistinguish'd Sound of threat'ning Rage.

MUSTAPHA.

How Guilt once harbour'd in the conscious Breast,
Intimidates the Brave, degrades the Great.

See CALI, Dread of Kings, and Pride of Armies,
By Treason levell'd with the Dregs of Men.

Ere guilty Fear depress'd the hoary Chief,
An angry Murmur, a rebellious Frown,
Had stretch'd the fiery Boaster in the Grave.

MAHOMET.

Shall Monarchs fear to draw the Sword of Justice,
Aw'd by the Croud, and by their Slaves restrain'd?
Seize him this Night, and through the private Passage
Convey him to the Prison's inmost Depths,
Reserv'd to all the Pangs of tedious Death.

[*Exeunt Mahomet and Mustapha.*

SCENE IX.

HASAN, CARAZA.

HASAN.

Shall then the *Greeks*, unpunish'd and conceal'd,
Contrive perhaps, the Ruin of our Empire,
League with our Chiefs, and propagate Sedition?

CARAZA.

Whate'er their Scheme the BASSA's Death defeats it,
And Gratitude's strong Ties restrain my Tongue.

HASAN.

What Ties to Slaves? what Gratitude to Foes?

CARAZA.

In that black Day when slaughter'd Thousands fell
Around these fatal Walls, the Tide of War

Bore

64 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

Bore me victorious onward, where DEMETRIUS
Tore unresisted from the Giant Hand
Of stern *Sebasias* the triumphant Crescent,
And dash'd the Might of *Asem* from the Ramparts.
There I became, nor blush to make it known,
The Captive of his Sword. The coward *Greeks*,
Enrag'd by Wrongs, exulting with Success,
Doom'd me to die with all the *Turkish* Captains.
But brave DEMETRIUS scorn'd the mean Revenge,
And gave me Life----

HASAN.

Do thou repay the Gift,
Lest unrewarded Mercy lose its Charms.
Profuse of Wealth, or bounteous of Success,
When Heav'n bestows the Privilege to bless ;
Let no weak Doubt the gen'rous Hand restrain,
For when was Pow'r beneficent in vain ?



A. C. T



A C T V.

S C E N E I.

ASPASIA *solus.*

IN these dark Moments of suspended Fate,
 While yet the future Fortune of my Country
 Lies in the Womb of Providence conceal'd,
 And anxious Angels wait the mighty Birth ;
 O grant thy sacred Influence, pow'rful Virtue !
 Attention rise, survey the fair Creation,
 Till conscious of th' incircling Deity,
 Beyond the Mists of Care thy Pinion tow'rs.
 This Calm, these Joys, dear Innocence ! are thine,
 Joys ill exchang'd for Gold, and Pride, and Empire.

[Enter Irene and Attendants.

S C E N E II.

ASPASIA, IRENE, and Attendants.

IRENE.

See how the Moon through all th'unclouded Sky
 Spreads her mild Radiance, and descending Dews
 Revive the languid Flow'rs ; thus Nature shone
 New from the Maker's Hand, and fair array'd
 In the bright Colours of primæval Spring ;
 When Purity, while Fraud was yet unknown,

F

Play'd

66. IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

Play'd fearless in th' inviolated Shades.

This elemental joy, this gen'ral Calm,
Is sure the Smile of unoffended Heav'n.

Yet ! why—

MAID.

Behold, within th' embow'ring Grove
ASPASIA stands—

IRENE.

With melancholy Mien,
Pensive, and envious of IRENE's Greatness.
Steal unperceiv'd upon her Meditations—
But see, the lofty Maid at our Approach,
Resumes th' imperious Air of haughty Virtue.
Are these th' unceasing Joys, th' unmingle Pleasures
For which ASPASIA scorn'd the *Turkisb* Crown ? [To Asp.
Is this th' unshaken Confidence in Heav'n ?
Is this the boasted Bliss of conscious Virtue ?
When did Content sigh out her Cares in secret ?
When did Felicity repine in Desarts ?

ASPASIA.

Ill suits with Guilt the Gaiéties of Triumph ;
When daring Vice insults eternal Justice,
The Ministers of Wrath forget Compassion,
And snatch the flaming Bolt with hasty Hand.

IRENE.

Forbear thy Threats, proud Prophetess of ill,
Vers'd in the secret Counsels of the Sky.

ASPASIA.

Forbear—But thou art sunk beneath Reproach ;
In vain affected Raptures flush the Cheek,
And Songs of Pleasure warble from the Tongue ;
When Fear and Anguish labour in the Breast,
And all within is Darkness and Confusion ;

MAID

Thus

Thus on deceitful *Etna's* flow'ry Side,
 Unfading Verdure glads the roving Eye,
 While secret Flames, with unextinguish'd Rage,
 Infatiate on her wasted Entrails prey,
 And melt her treach'rous Beauties into Ruin. [Enter Dem.

SCENE III.

ASPASIA, IRENE, DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

Fly, fly, my Love, Destruction rushes on us,
 The Rack expects us, and the Sword pursues.

ASPASIA.

Is *Greece* deliver'd? is the Tyrant fall'n?

DEMETRIUS.

Greece is no more, the prosp'rous Tyrant lives,
 Reserv'd, for other Lands, the Scourge of Heav'n.

ASPASIA.

Say, by what Fraud, what Force were you defeated?
 Betray'd by Falshood, or by Crouds o'erborn?

DEMETRIUS.

The pressing Exigence forbids Relation.

ABDALLA—

ASPASIA.

Hated Name! his jealous Rage
 Broke out in Perfidy—Oh curs'd ASPASIA,
 Born to compleat the Ruin of her Country;
 Hide me, oh hide me from upbraiding *Greece*,
 Oh, hide me from myself!

DEMETRIUS.

Be fruitless Grief

The Doom of Guilt alone, nor dare to seize
 The Breast where Virtue guards the Throne of Peace.

F 2

Devolve,

68 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

Devolve, dear Maid thy Sorrows on the Wretch,
Whose Fear, or Rage, or Treachery betray'd us.

IRENE *aside.*

A private Station may discover more ;
Then let me rid them of IRENE's Presence :
Proceed, and give a loose to Love and Treason.

[Withdraws.

ASPASIA.

Yet tell.

DEMETRIUS.

To tell, or hear, were Waste of Life.

ASPASIA.

The Life, which only this Design supported,
Were now well lost, in hearing how you fail'd.

DEMETRIUS.

Or meanly fraudulent, or madly gay,
ABDALLA, while we waited near the Palace,
With ill-tim'd Mirth propos'd the Bowl of Love.
Just as it reach'd my Lips, a sudden Cry
Urg'd me to dash it to the Ground untouch'd,
And seize my Sword with disencumber'd Hand.

ASPASIA.

What Cry ? The Stratagem ? Did then ABDALLA ? —

DEMETRIUS.

At once a Thousand Passions fir'd his Cheek :
Then all is past he cried—and darted from us ;
Nor at the Call of CALI deign'd to turn.

ASPASIA.

Why did you stay ? deserted and betray'd ?
What more could Force attempt, or Art contrive ?

DEMETRIUS.

Amazement seiz'd us, and the hoary Baffa
Stood torpid in Suspence ; but soon ABDALLA

Return'd

Return'd with Force that made Resistance vain,
And bade his new Confederates seize the Traitors.

CALI disarm'd was born away to Death ;
Myself escap'd, for favour'd or neglected.

ASPASIA,

O Greece ! renown'd for Science and for Wealth,
Behold thy boasted Honours snatch'd away.

DEMETRIUS.

Though Disappointment blast our general Scheme,
Yet much remains to hope. I shall not call
The Day disast'rous that secures our Flight ;
Nor think that Effort lost which rescues thee. [Enter Abd.

S C E N E IV.

IRENE, ASPASIA, DEMETRIUS, ABDALLA.

ABDALLA.

At length the Prize is mine—The haughty Maid
That bears the Fate of Empires in her Air,
Henceforth shall live for me; for me alone
Shall plume her Charms, and, with attentive Watch,
Steal from ABDALLA's Eye the Sign to smile.

DEMETRIUS.

Cease this wild Roar of savage Exultation ;
Advance, and perish in the frantic Boast.

ASPASIA.

Forbear, DEMETRIUS, 'tis ASPASIA calls thee ;
Thy Love, ASPASIA, calls ; restrain thy Sword ;
Nor rush on useless Wounds with idle Courage.

DEMETRIUS.

What now remains ?

70 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

ASPASIA.

It now remains to fly?

DEMETRIUS.

Shall then the Savage live, to boast his Insult;
Tell how DEMETRIUS shun'd his single Hand,
And stole his Life and Mistress from his Sabre?

ABDALLA.

Infatuate Loiterer, has Fate, in vain,
Unclasp'd his Iron Gripe to set thee free;
Still dost thou flutter in the Jaws of Death?
Snar'd with thy Fears, and maz'd in Stupefaction.

DEMETRIUS.

Forgive, my Fair, 'tis Life, 'tis Nature calls.
Now, Traytor, feel the Fear that chills my Hand.

ASPASIA.

'Tis Madness to provoke superfluous Danger,
And Cowardice to dread the Boast of Folly.

ABDALLA.

Fly, Wretch, while yet my Pity grants thee Flight;
The Power of Turkey waits upon my Call.
Leave but this Maid, resign a hopeless Claim,
And drag away thy Life in Scorn and Safety,
Thy Life, too mean a Prey to lure ABDALLA.

DEMETRIUS.

Once more I dare thy Sword, behold the Prize,
Behold I quit her to the Chance of Battle. [Quitting Aspasia.

ABDALLA.

Well mayst thou call thy Master to the Combat,
And try the Hazard that hast Nought to stake;
Alike my Death or thine is gain to thee,
But soon thou shalt repent: another Moment
Shall throw th' attending Janizaries round thee.

[Exit hastily ABDALLA.

S C E N E

IRENE, A TRAGEDY. 71

SCENE V.

ASPASIA, DEMETRIUS,

IRENE.

ABDALLA fails, now Fortune all is mine. [Aside.
Haste, MURZA, to the Palace, let the Sultan [To one of her
Dispatch his Guards to stop the flying Traytors, Attendants.
While I protract their Stay. Be swift and faithful.

[Exit MURZA.

This lucky Stratagem shall charm the Sultan, [Aside.
Secure his Confidence, and fix his Love.

DEMETRIUS.

Behold a Boaster's Worth. Now snatch, my Fair,
The happy Moment, hasten to the Shore,
Ere he return with Thousands at his Side.

ASPASIA.

In vain I listen to th' inviting Call
Of Freedom and of Love: My trembling Joints
Relax'd with Fear, refuse to bear me forward.
Depart, DEMETRIUS, lest my Fate involve thee,
Forsake a Wretch abandon'd to Despair,
To share the Miseries herself has caus'd.

DEMETRIUS.

Let us not struggle with th' eternal Will,
Nor languish o'er irreparable Ruins;
Come haste, and live—Thy Innocence and Truth
Shall bless our Wand'ring, and propitiate Heav'n.

IRENE.

Press not her Flight, while yet her feeble Nerves
Refuse their Office, and uncertain Life

F 4

Still

72 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

Still labours with imaginary Woe ;
Here let me tend her with officious Care,
Watch each unquiet Flutter of the Breast,
And joy to feel the vital Warmth return,
To see the Cloud forsake her kindling Cheek,
And hail the rosy Dawn of rising Health.

ASPASIA.

Oh ! rather scornful of flagitious Greatness,
Resolve to share our Dangers and our Toils,
Companion of our Flight, illustrious Exile,
Leave Slav'ry, Guilt, and Infamy behind.

IRENE.

My Soul attends thy Voice, and banish'd Virtue
Strives to regain her Empire of the Mind :
Assist her Efforts with thy strong Persuasion ;
Sure 'tis the happy Hour ordain'd above,
When vanquish'd Vice shall tyrannize no more.

DEMETRIUS.

Remember, Peace and Anguish are before thee,
And Honour and Reproach, and Heav'n and Hell.

ASPASIA.

Content with Freedom, and precarious Greatness.

DEMETRIUS.

Now make thy Choice, while yet the Pow'r of Choice
Kind Heaven affords thee, and inviting Mercy
Holds out her Hand to lead thee back to Truth.

IRENE.

Stay --- in this dubious Twilight of Conviction,
The Gleams of Reason, and the Clouds of Passion,
Irradiate and obscure my Breast by Turns :
Stay but a Moment, and prevailing Truth
Will spread resistless Light upon my Soul.

DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

But since none knows the Danger of a Moment,
And Heav'n forbids to lavish Life away,
Let kind Compulsion terminate the Contest.

[Seizing her Hand]

Ye Christian Captives, follow me to Freedom:
A Galley waits us, and the Winds invite.

IRENE.

Whence is this Violence?

DEMETRIUS.

Your calmer Thought

Will teach a gentler Term.

IRENE.

Forbear this Rudeness,

And learn the Rev'rence due to Turkey's Queen.

Fly, Slaves, and call the Sultan to my Rescue.

DEMETRIUS.

Farewell, unhappy Maid, may ev'ry Joy
Be thine, that Wealth can give, or Guilt receive.

ASPASIA.

And when, contemptuous of imperial Pow'r,
Disease shall chase the Phantoms of Ambition,
May Penitence attend thy mournful Bed,
And wing thy latest Pray'r to pitying Heav'n.

[Exeunt Demetrius, Aspasia, with Part of the Attendants.

SCENE

SCENE VI.

IRENE walks at a Distance from her Attendants.

After a Pause.

Against the Head which Innocence secures,
 Insidious Malice aims her Darts in vain ;
 Turn'd backwards by the powerful Breath of Heav'n.
 Perhaps ev'n now the Lovers unpursu'd
 Bound o'er the sparkling Waves. Go, happy Bark,
 Thy sacred Freight shall still the raging Main.
 To guide thy Passage shall th' aerial Spirits
 Fill all the starry Lamps with double Blaze ;
 Th' applauding Sky shall pour forth all its Beams
 To grace the Triumph of victorious Virtue.
 While I, not yet familiar to my Crimes,
 Recoil from Thought, and shudder at myself.
 How am I chang'd ! How lately did IRENE
 Fly from the busy Pleasures of her Sex,
 Well pleas'd to search the Treasures of Remembrance,
 And live her guiltless Moments o'er anew !
 Come let us seek new Pleasures in the Palace, [To her Attendants, going off.
 Till soft Fatigue invite us to repose.

SCENE VII.

Enter MUSTAPHA, meeting and stopping her.

MUSTAPHA.

Fair Falshood stay.

IRENE.

What Dream of sudden Power
 Has taught my Slave the Language of Command !

Henceforth

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

75

Henceforth be wise, nor hope a second Pardon.

MUSTAPHA.

Who calls for Pardon from a Wretch condemn'd?

IRENE.

Thy Look, thy Speech, thy Action, all is Wildness—

Who charges Guilt on me?

MUSTAPHA.

Who charges Guilt?

Ask of thy Heart? attend the Voice of Conscience—

Who charges Guilt! lay by this proud Resentment

That fires thy Cheek, and elevates thy Mien,

Nor thus usurp the Dignity of Virtue.

Review this Day.

IRENE.

Whate'er thy Accusation,

The Sultan is my Judge;

MUSTAPHA.

That Hope is past;

Hard was the Strife of Justice and of Love;

But now 'tis o'er, and Justice has prevail'd.

Know'st thou not CALI? know'st thou not DEMETRIUS?

IRENE.

Bold Slave, I know them both—I know them Traytors.

MUSTAPHA.

Perfidious!—yes—too well thou know'st them Traytors.

IRENE.

Their Treason throws no Stain upon IRENE.

This Day has prov'd my Fondness for the Sultan;

He knew IRENE's Truth,

MUSTAPHA.

The Sultan knows it,

He knows how near Apostacy to Treason—

But 'tis not mine to judge—I scorn and leave thee.

76 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

I go, lest Vengeance urge my Hand to Blood,
To Blood, too mean to stain a Soldier's Sabre.

[Exit Mustapha.]

IRENE to her Attendants.

Go, blustering Slave.—He has not heard of MURZA,
That dext'rous Message frees me from Suspicion.

SCENE VIII.

Enter HASAN, CARAZA with Mutes, who throw the black Robe upon IRENE, and sign to her Attendants to withdraw.

HASAN.

Forgive, fair Excellence, th' unwilling Tongue,
The Tongue, that, forc'd by strong Necessity,
Bids Beauty, such as thine, prepare to die.

IRENE.

What wild Mistake is this? Take hence with speed
Your Robe of Mourning, and your Dogs of Death.
Quick from my Sight you inauspicious Monsters,
Nor dare henceforth to shock IRENE's Walks.

HASAN.

Alas! they come, commanded by the Sultan,
Th' unpitying Ministers of Turkish Justice,
Nor dare to spare the Life his Frown condemns.

IRENE.

Are these the rapid Thunderbolts of War,
That pour with sudden Violence on Kingdoms,
And spread their Flames resistless o'er the World?
What sleepy charms benumb these active Heroes,
Depress their Spirits, and retard their Speed?
Beyond the Fear of ling'ring Punishment,

ASPASIA.

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

77

ASPASIA now within her Lover's Arms
Securely sleeps, and, in delightful Dreams,
Smiles at the Threat'nings of defeated Rage.

CARAZA.

We come, bright Virgin, tho' relenting Nature
Shrinks at the hated Task, for thy Destruction ;
When, summon'd by the Sultan's clam'rous Fury,
We ask'd, with tim'rous Tongue, th' Offender's Name,
He struck his tortur'd Breast, and roar'd, IRENE :
We started at the Sound, again enquir'd,
Again his thund'ring Voice return'd, IRENE.

IRENE.

Whence is this Rage ? what barb'rous Tongue has
wrong'd me ?

What Fraud misleads him ? or what Crimes incense ?

HASAN.

Expiring CALI nam'd IRENE's Chamber,
The Place appointed for his Master's Death.

IRENE.

IRENE's Chamber ! From my faithful Bosom
Far be the Thought — But hear my Protestation.

CARAZA.

'Tis ours, alas ! to punish, not to judge,
Not call'd to try the Cause, we heard the Sentence,
Ordain'd the mournful Messengers of Death.

IRENE.

Some ill designing Statesman's base Intrigue !
Some cruel Stratagem of jealous Beauty !
Perhaps yourselves the Villains that defame me,
Now haste to murder, ere returning Thought
Recall th' extorted Doom. — It must be so,
Confess your Crime, or lead me to the Sultan,
There dauntless Truth shall blast the vile Accuser,

Then

78 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

Then shall you feel what Language cannot utter,
Each piercing Torture, every Change of Pain,
That Vengeance can invent, or Pow'r inflict.

[Enter ABDALLA, he stops short and listens.

SCENE IX.

IRENE, HASAN, CARAZA, ABDALLA.

ABDALLA *Aside.*

All is not lost, ABDALLA, see the Queen,
See the last Witness of thy Guilt and Fear
Enrob'd in Death — Dispatch her and be great.

CARAZA.

Unhappy Fair ! Compassion calls upon me
To check this Torrent of imperious Rage,
While unavailing Anger crouds thy Tongue
With idle Threats and fruitless Exclamation,
The fraudulent Moments ply their silent Wings,
And steal thy Life away. Death's horrid Angel
Already shakes his bloody Sabre o'er thee.
The raging Sultan burns till our Return,
Curses the dull Delays of ling'ring Mercy,
And thinks his fatal Mandates ill obey'd.

ABDALLA.

Is then your Sov'reign's Life so cheaply rated,
That thus you parly with detected Treason ?
Should she prevail to gain the Sultan's Presence,
Soon might her Tears engage a Lover's Credit ;
Perhaps her Malice might transfer the Charge,
Perhaps her pois'nous Tongue might blast ABDALLA.

IRENE.

modT

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

79

IRENE.

O let me but be heard, nor fear from me
 Or Flights of Pow'r, or Projects of Ambition,
 My Hopes, my Wishes, terminate in Life,
 A little Life for Grief, and for Repentance.

ABDALLA.

I mark'd her wily Messenger afar,
 And saw him skulking in the closest Walks :
 I gues'd her dark Designs, and warn'd the Sultan,
 And bring her former Sentence new confirm'd.

HASAN.

Then call it not our Cruelty, nor Crime,
 Deem us not deaf to Woe, nor blind to Beauty,
 That thus constrain'd we speed the Stroke of Death.

[Beckons the Mutes.

IRENE.

O name not Death ! Distraction and Amazement,
 Horror and Agony are in that Sound !
 Let me but live, heap Woes on Woes upon me,
 Hide me with Murd'lers in the Dungeon's Gloom,
 Send me to wander on some pathless Shore,
 Let Shame and hooting Infamy pursue me,
 Let Slav'ry harras, and let Hunger gripe.

CARAZA.

Could we reverse the Sentence of the Sultan,
 Our bleeding Bosoms plead IRENE's Cause.
 But Cries and Tears are vain, prepare with Patience
 To meet that Fate we can delay no longer.

[The Mutes at the Sign lay hold of her.

ABDALLA.

Dispatch, ye ling'ring Slaves, or nimbler Hands
 Quick at my Call shall execute your Charge ;

Dispatch,

80 IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

Dispatch, and learn a fitter Time for Pity.

IRENE.

Grant me one Hour, O grant me but a Moment,
And bounteous Heaven repay the mighty Mercy
With peaceful Death, and Happiness eternal.

CARAZA.

The Prayer I cannot grant—I dare not hear.

Short be thy Pains. [Signs again to the Mutes.

IRENE.

Unutterable Anguish !

Guilt and Despair ! pale Spectres, grin around me,
And stun me with the Yellings of Damnation !
O, hear my Pray'rs ! accept, all-pitying Heaven,
These Tears, these Pangs, these last Remains of Life,
Nor let the Crimes of this detested Day
Be charg'd upon my Soul. O, Mercy ! Mercy !

[Mutes force her out.

S C E N E X.

ABDALLA, HASAN, CARAZA.

ABDALLA *Aside.*

Safe in her Death, and in DEMETRIUS' Flight,
ABDALLA, bid thy troubled Breast be calm ;
Now shalt thou shine the Darling of the Sultan,
The Plot all CALI's, the Detection thine.

HASAN to CARAZA.

Does not thy Bosom, for I know thee tender,
A Stranger to th' Oppressor's savage Joy,
Melt at IRENE's Fate, and share her Woes ?

CARAZA.

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

81

CARAZA.

Her piercing Cries yet fill the loaded Air,
Dwell on my Ear, and fadden all my Soul ;
But let us try to clear our clouded Brows,
And tell the horrid Tale with chearful Face ;
The stormy Sultan rages at our stay.

ABDALLA.

Frame your Report with circumspective Art,
Inflame her Crimes, exalt your own Obedience,
But let no thoughtless Hint involve ABDALLA.

CARAZA.

What need of Caution to report the Fate
Of her the Sultan's Voice condemn'd to die ?
Or why should he, whose Violence of Duty
Has serv'd his Prince so well, demand our Silence ?

ABDALLA.

Perhaps my Zeal too fierce betray'd my Prudence ;
Perhaps my Warmth exceeded my Commission ;
Perhaps I will not stoop to plead my Cause ;
Or argue with the Slave that fav'd DEMETRIUS.

CARAZA.

From his Escape learn thou the Pow'r of Virtue,
Nor hope his Fortune while thou want'st his Worth.

HASAN.

The Sultan comes, still gloomy, still enrag'd.

S C E N E XI.

HASAN, CARAZA, MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA, ABDALLA.

MAHOMET.

Where's this fair Trait'res ? Where's this smiling Mischief ?
Whom neither Vows could fix, nor Favours bind ?

G

HASAN.

HASAN.

Thine Orders, mighty Sultan ! are perform'd,
And all IRENE now is breathless Clay.

MAHOMET.

Your hasty Zeal defrauds the Claim of Justice,
And disappointed Vengeance burns in vain ;
I came to heighten Tortures by Reproach,
And add new Terrors to the Face of Death.

Was this the Maid whose Love I bought with Empire !
True, she was fair ; the Smile of Innocence
Play'd on her Cheek---So shone the first Apostate---
IRENE's Chamber ! Did not roaring CALI,
Just as the Rack forc'd out his struggling Soul,
Name for the Scene of Death IRENE's Chamber ?

MUSTAPHA.

His Breath prolong'd but to detect her Treason,
Then in short Sighs forsook his broken Frame.

MAHOMET.

Decreed to perish in IRENE's Chamber !
There had she lull'd me with endearing Falshoods,
Clasp'd in her Arms, or slumb'ring on her Breast,
And bar'd my Bosom to the Ruffian's Dagger.

SCENE XII.

HASAN, CARAZA, MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA,
MURZA, ABDALLA.

MURZA.

Forgive, great Sultan ! that by Fate prevented,
I bring a tardy Message from IRENE.

MAHOMET.

Some artful Wile of counterfeited Love !
Some soft Decoy to lure me to Destruction !

And

And thou, the curs'd Accomplice of her Treason,
Declare thy Message, and expect thy Doom.

MURZA.

The Queen requested that a chosen Troop
Might intercept the Traitor *Greek, DEMETRIUS,*
Then ling'ring with his captive Mistress here.

MUSTAPHA.

The *Greek, DEMETRIUS!* whom th' expiring Baffa
Declar'd the chief Associate of his Guilt.

MAHOMET.

A chosen Troop---to intercept---DEMETRIUS---
The Queen requested---Wretch, repeat the Message ;
And if one varied Accent prove thy Falshood,
Or but one Moment's Pause betray Confusion,
Those trembling Limbs---Speak out, thou shiv'ring Traitor.

MURZA.

The Queen requested---

MAHOMET.

Who ? the dead IRENE ?

Was she then guiltless ! Has my thoughtless Rage
Destroy'd the fairest Workmanship of Heav'n !
Doom'd her to Death unpity'd and unheard,
Amidst her kind Solitudes for me !

Ye Slaves of Cruelty, ye Tools of Rage, [To Haf. and Car.
Ye blind officious Ministers of Folly,
Could not her Charms repress your Zeal for Murder ?
Could not her Prayers, her Innocence, her Tears,
Suspend the dreadful Sentence for an Hour ?
One Hour had freed me from the fatal Error,
One Hour had sav'd me from Despair and Madness.

CARAZA.

Your fierce Impatience forc'd us from your Presence,
Urg'd us to Speed, and bad us banish Pity,
Nor trust our Passions with her fatal Charms.

MAHOMET.

What hadst thou lost by slighting those Commands ?
 Thy Life perhaps—Were but IRENE spar'd,
 Well if a Thousand Lives like thine had perish'd ;
 Such Beauty, Sweetness, Love, were cheaply bought,
 With half the grov'ling Slaves that load the Globe.

MUSTAPHA.

Great is thy Woe ! but think, illustrious Sultan,
 Such Ills are sent for Souls like thine to conquer.
 Shake off this Weight of unavailing Grief,
 Rush to the War, display thy dreadful Banners,
 And lead thy Troops victorious round the World.

MAHOMET.

Robb'd of the Maid, with whom I wish'd to triumph,
 No more I burn for Fame or for Dominion ;
 Success and Conquest now are empty Sounds,
 Remorse and Anguish seize on all my Breast ;
 Those Groves, whose Shades embower'd the dear IRENE,
 Heard her last Cries, and fann'd her dying Beauties,
 Shall hide me from the tasteless World for ever.

[Mahomet goes back and returns.

Yet ere I quit the Scepter of Dominion,
 Let one just Act conclude the hateful Day.

Hew down, ye Guards, those Vassals of Distraction,

[Pointing to Hasan and Caraza.

Those Hounds of Blood, that catch the Hint to kill,
 Bear off with eager haste th' unfinish'd Sentence,
 And speed the Stroke lest Mercy should o'ertake them.

CARAZA.

Then hear, great MAHOMET, the Voice of Truth.

MAHOMET.

Hear ! shall I hear thee ! did'st thou hear IRENE ?

CARAZA.

Hear but a Moment.

IRENE, A TRAGEDY.

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MAHOMET.

Had'st thou heard a Moment,
Thou might'st have liv'd, for thou hadst spar'd IRENE.

CARAZA.

I heard her, pitied her, and wish'd to save her.

MAHOMET.

And wish'd---Be still thy Fate to wish in vain.

CARAZA.

I heard, and soften'd, till ABDALLA brought
Her final Doom, and hurried her Destruction.

MAHOMET.

ABDALLA brought her Doom ! ABDALLA brought it !
The Wretch, whose Guilt declar'd by tortur'd CALI,
My Rage and Grief had hid from my remembrance,
ABDALLA brought her Doom !

HASAN.

ABDALLA brought it,

While she yet beg'd to plead her Cause before thee.

MAHOMET.

O seize me, Madnes---Did she call on me !
I feel, I see the Ruffian's barb'rous Rage.
He seiz'd her melting in the fond Appeal,
And stopp'd the heav'nly Voice that call'd on me.
My Spirits fail, awhile support me, Vengeance—
Be just ye Slaves, and, to be just, be cruel,
Contrive new Racks, imbitter every Pang,
Inflict whatever Treason can deserve,
Which murder'd Innocence that call'd on me. [Exit Mahomet.

[Abdalla is dragg'd off.

S C E N E

SCENE XIII.

MAHOMET, HASAN, CARAZA, MUSTAPHA, MURZA.

MUSTAPHA ' MURZA.

What Plagues, what Tortures, are in store for thee,
 Thou sluggish Idler, dilatory Slave ?
 Behold the Model of consummate Beauty,
 Torn from the mourning Earth by thy Neglect.

MURZA.

Such was the Will of Heav'n---A Band of *Greeks*
 That mark'd my Course, suspicious of my Purpose,
 Rush'd out and seiz'd me, thoughtless and unarm'd,
 Breathless, amaz'd, and on the guarded Beach
 Detain'd me till DEMETRIUS set me free.

MUSTAPHA.

So sure the Fall of Greatness rais'd on Crimes,
 So fix'd the Justice of all-conscious Heav'n.

When haughty Guilt exults with impious Joy,
 Mistake shall blast, or Accident destroy ;
 Weak Man with erring Rage may throw the Dart,
 But Heav'n shall guide it to the guilty Heart.

F I N I S.



